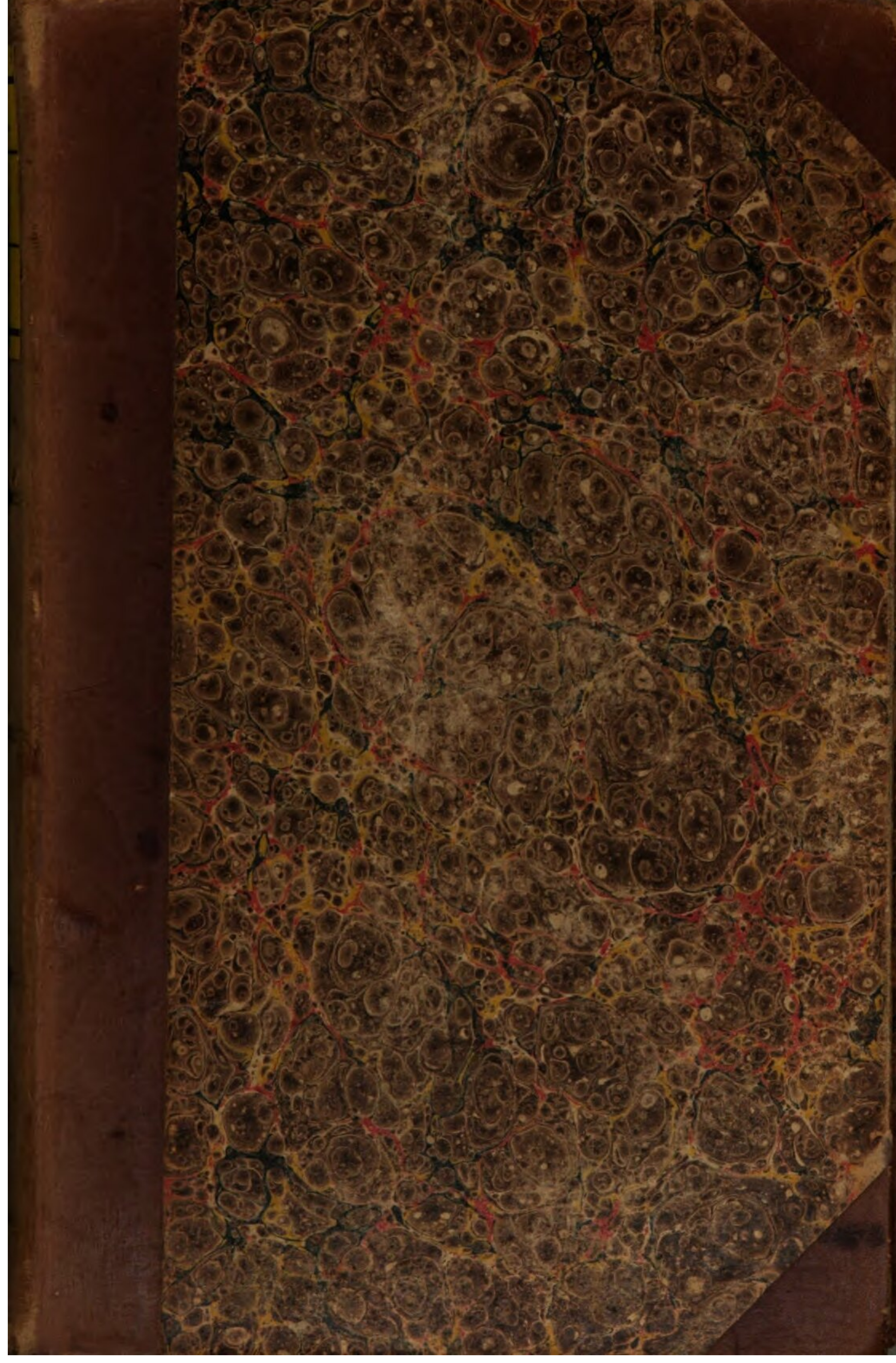




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POPE.

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 Vol. I. P. 66. line 170. 3c.

THE
POETICAL WORKS
OF
ALEXANDER POPE.

WITH HIS LAST
CORRECTIONS, ADDITIONS,
AND
IMPROVEMENTS.

FROM THE TEXT OF DR. WARBURTON.

WITH THE LIFE OF THE AUTHOR.

VOL. I.

Cooke's Edition.

But see, at length, the British Genius smile,
And show'r her bounties o'er her favour'd isle:
Behold, for POPE she twines the laurel crown,
And centres ev'ry poet's pow'r in one-----
Each Muse for thee with kind contention strove,
For thee the Graces left th' Idalian grove,
With watchful fondness o'er thy cradle hung,
Attun'd thy voice, and form'd thy infant tongue.
Brown.

EMBELLISHED WITH SUPERB ENGRAVINGS.

London:
Printed for C. COOKE, Paternoster Row,
by R. M'Donald, 13, Green Arbour Court, and
sold by all the Booksellers in the
United Kingdom.

THE
POETICAL WORKS
OF
ALEXANDER POPE.

VOL. I.

CONTAINING HIS

PASTORALS,	ESSAY ON CRITICISM,
MESSIAH,	ESSAY ON MAN,
WINDSOR FOREST,	MORAL ESSAYS,
RAPE OF THE LOCK,	TRANSLATIONS,
IMITATIONS, &c. &c.	

Come then, my Friend! my Genius! come along;
Oh, master of the poet and the song!
And while the Muse now stoops, or now ascends,
To man's low passions, or their glorious ends,
Teach me, like thee, in various Nature wise,
To fall with dignity, with temper rise-----
Oh! while along the stream of time thy name
Expanded flies, and gathers all its fame,
Say, shall my little bark attendant sail,
Pursue the triumph, and partake the gale?
Shall then this Verse to future age pretend
Thou wert my guide, philosopher, and friend?
That, urg'd by thee, I turn'd the tuneful art
From sounds to things, from faucy to the heart?
For Wit's false mirror held up Nature's light,
Shew'd erring Pride--whatever is, is right-----
That virtue only makes our bliss below,
And all our knowledge is---ourselves to know?

Essay on Man.

PRINTED AND EMBELLISHED
Under the Direction of
C. COOKE,

LIFE OF ALEXANDER POPE.

THIS illustrious poet was born at London, in 1688, and was descended from a family in Oxfordshire, the head of which was the earl of Downe, whose sole heiress married the earl of Lindsey. His father, a man of primitive simplicity and integrity of manners, was a merchant of London; who, upon the Revolution, quitted trade, and converted his effects into money, amounting to near 10,000*l.* with which he retired into the country; and died in 1717, at the age of seventy-five.

Our poet's mother, who lived to a very advanced age, being ninety-three years old when she died in 1733, was the daughter of William Turner, Esq. of York. She had three brothers; one of whom was killed; another died in the service of king Charles; and the eldest, following his fortunes, and becoming a general officer in Spain, left her what estate remained after sequestration and forfeitures of her family. To these circumstances our Poet alludes in his Epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot, in which he mentions his parents.

Of gentle blood (part shed in Honour's cause,
While yet in Britain honour had applause)
Each parent sprang---What fortune pray?---Their own;
And better got than Bestia's from the throne.
Born to no pride, inheriting no strife,
Nor marrying discord in a noble wife;
Stranger to civil and religious rage,
The good man walk'd innoxious thro' his age;
No courts he saw, no suits would ever try;
Nor dar'd an oath, nor hazarded a lie;
Unlearn'd, he knew no schoolmen's subtle art,
No language but the language of the heart:
By nature honest, by experience wise,
Healthy by temp'rance and by exercise;
His life, though long, to sickness pass'd unknown;
His death was instant, and without a groan.

The education of our great author was attended with circumstances very singular, and some of them extremely unfavourable; but the amazing force of his

genius fully compensated the want of any advantage in his earliest instruction. He owed the knowledge of his letters to an aunt; and having learned very early to read, took great delight in it, and taught himself to write by copying after printed books, the characters of which he would imitate to great perfection. He began to compose verses farther back than he could well remember; and at eight years of age, when he was put under one Taverner, a priest, who taught him the rudiments of the Latin and Greek tongues at the same time, he met with Ogilby's Homer, which gave him great delight; and this was increased by Sandy's Ovid. The raptures which these authors, even in the disguise of such translations, then yielded him, were so strong, that he spoke of them with pleasure ever after.

From Mr. Taverner's tuition he was sent to a private school at Twiford, near Winchester, where he continued about a year, and was then removed to another near Hyde-Park Corner; but was so unfortunate as to lose under his two last masters what he had acquired under the first.

While he remained at this school, being permitted to go to the playhouse with some of his schoolfellows of a more advanced age, he was so charmed with dramatic representations, that he formed the translation of the Iliad into a play, from several of the speeches in Ogilby's translation connected with verses of his own; and the several parts were performed by the upper boys of the school, except that of Ajax by the master's gardener. At the age of twelve our young poet went with his father to reside at his house at Binfield, in Windsor Forest, where he was, for a few months, under the tuition of another priest, with as little success as before; so that he resolved now to become his own master, by reading those classic writers which gave him most entertainment; and by this method, at fifteen, he gained a ready habit in the learned languages, to which he soon after added the French and Italian. Upon his retreat to the

Forest he became first acquainted with the writings of Waller, Spenser, and Dryden; in the last of which he immediately found what he wanted; and the poems of that excellent writer were never out of his hands: they became his model, and from them alone he learned the whole magic of his versification.

The first of our author's compositions now extant in print, is an '*Ode on Solitude*,' written before he was twelve years old; which, considered as the production of so early an age, is a perfect master-piece; nor need he have been ashamed of it, had it been written in the meridian of his genius: while it breathes the most delicate spirit of poetry; it at the same time demonstrates his love of solitude, and the rational pleasures which attend the retreats of a contented country life.

Two years after this he translated the First Book of Statius's '*Thebais*,' and wrote a copy of verses on Silence, in imitation of the Earl of Rochester's poem on Nothing. Thus we find him no sooner capable of holding the pen than he employed it in writing verses:

He lisp'd in numbers, for the numbers came.

Though we have had frequent opportunities to observe that poets have given early displays of genius, yet we cannot recollect that, amongst the inspired tribe, one can be found who, at the age of twelve, could produce so animated an ode, or, at the age of fourteen, translate from the Latin. It has been reported, indeed, concerning Mr. Dryden, that when he was at Westminster school, the master, who had assigned a poetical task to some of the boys, of writing a paraphrase on our Saviour's miracle of turning water into wine, was perfectly astonished when young Dryden presented him with the following line, which he asserted was the best comment that could be written upon it;

The conscious water saw its God, and blush'd.

This was the only instance of an early appearance of genius in this great man, for he was turned of

thirty before he acquired any reputation; an age in which Mr. Pope's was in its full distinction.

The year following that in which Mr. Pope wrote his poem on 'Silence,' he began an epic poem, entitled 'Alcander,' which he afterwards committed to the flames, as he did likewise a comedy and a tragedy, the latter taken from a story in the legend of St. Genevieve, both of these being the product of those early days: but his Pastorals, which were written when he was only sixteen years of age, were esteemed by Sir William Trumball, Mr. Granville, Mr. Wycherley, Mr. Walsh, and others of his friends, too valuable to be condemned to the same fate.

During this period of his life he was indefatigably diligent, and insatiably curious. Wanting health for violent, and money for expensive pleasures, and having excited in himself very strong desires of intellectual eminence, he spent much of his time over his books; but he read only to store his mind with facts and images, seizing all that his authors presented with undistinguishing voracity, and with an appetite for knowledge too eager to be nice. In a mind like his, however, all the faculties were at once involuntarily improving. Judgment is forced upon us by experience. He that reads many books must compare one opinion or one style with another; and, when he compares, must necessarily distinguish, reject, and prefer. But the account given by himself of his studies was, that from fourteen to twenty he read only for amusement, from twenty to twenty-seven for improvement and instruction; that in the first part of this time he desired only to know, and in the second he endeavoured to judge.

The three great writers of pastoral dialogue, which Mr. Pope in some measure seems to imitate, are Theocritus, Virgil, and Spenser. Mr. Pope is of opinion that Theocritus excels all others in nature and simplicity.

That Virgil, who copies Theocritus, refines on his original; and in all points, in which judg-

ment has the principal part, is much superior to his master.

That among the moderns, their success has been greatest who have most endeavoured to make these Ancients their pattern. The most considerable genius appears in the famous Tasso, and our Spenser. Tasso, in his *Aminta*, has far excelled all the pastoral writers, as in his *Gierusalemme* he has outdone the epic poets of his own country. But as this piece seems to have been the original of a new sort of poem, the pastoral comedy, in Italy, it cannot so well be considered as a copy of the Ancients. Spenser's *Calendar*, in Mr. Dryden's opinion, is the most complete work of this kind which any nation has produced ever since the time of Virgil; but this he said before Mr. Pope's *Pastorals* appeared.

Mr. Walsh pronounces on our *Shepherd's Boy* (as Mr. Pope called himself) the following judgment, in a letter to Mr. Wycherley.

“The verses are very tender and easy. The Author seems to have a particular genius for this kind of poetry, and a judgment that much exceeds the years you told me he was of. It is no flattery to say, that Virgil had not written any thing so good at his age. I shall take it as a favour if you will make me acquainted with him; and if he will give himself the trouble any morning to call at my house, I shall be very glad to read the verses with him, and give him my opinion of the particulars more largely than I can well do in this letter.”

Thus early was Mr. Pope introduced to the acquaintance of men of genius, and so improved every advantage, that he made a more rapid progress towards a consummation in fame than any of our English poets. His *Messiah*, his *Windsor Forest* (the first part of which was written at the same time with his *Pastorals*), and his *Essay on Criticism* in 1709, were highly received.

In 1712 he wrote the ‘*Rape of the Lock*,’ occasioned by a frolic of gallantry, rather too familiar, in

which Lord Petre cut off a lock of Mrs. Arabella Fermor's hair. This, whether by stealth or violence, was so much resented, that the commerce of the two families, before very friendly, was interrupted.

The 'Rape of the Lock' stands forward in the classes of literature, as the most exquisite example of ludicrous poetry. Berkeley congratulated him upon the display of powers more truly poetical than he had shewn before; with elegance of description and justness of precepts, he had now exhibited boundless fertility of invention.

This poem established his poetical character in such a manner, that he was called upon by the public voice to enrich our language with the translation of the 'Iliad,' which he began at twenty-five, and executed in five years. This was published for his own benefit, by subscription, the only kind of reward which he received for his writings, which do honour to our age and country.

By the success of his subscription Pope was relieved from those pecuniary distresses with which, notwithstanding his popularity, he had hitherto struggled. Lord Oxford had often lamented his disqualification for public employment, but never proposed a pension. While the translation of Homer was in its progress, Mr. Craggs, then secretary of state, offered to procure him a pension, which, at least during his ministry, might be enjoyed with secrecy. This was not accepted by Pope, who told him, however, that if he should be pressed with want of money, he would send to him for occasional supplies. Craggs was not long in power, and was never solicited for money by Pope, who disdained to beg what he did not want.

With the product of this subscription, which he had too much discretion to squander, he secured his future life from want, by considerable annuities. The estate of the Duke of Buckingham was found to have been charged with five hundred pounds a year, pay-

able to Pope, which, doubtless, his translation enabled him to purchase.

The original copy of the 'Iliad' was obtained by Lord Bolingbroke as a curiosity, from whom it descended to Mr. Mallet, and is now, by the solicitation of the late Dr. Maty, deposited in the British Museum. Between this manuscript, which is written upon accidental fragments of paper, and the printed edition, there must have been an intermediate copy, which was probably destroyed as it returned from the press.

The reputation of Mr. Pope increasing every day, he was caressed, flattered, and railed at, according as he was feared or loved by different persons. Mr. Wycherley was among the first authors of established reputation who contributed to advance his fame, and with whom he for some time lived in the most unre-served intimacy.

One of the most affecting and tender compositions of Mr. Pope is his 'Elegy to the Memory of an Unfortunate Lady,' built on a true story. We are informed, that this young lady was a particular favourite of the poet, though it is not ascertained whether he was the person she was enamoured with. Her uncle finding that she would make no efforts to disengage her affection from her lover, forced her abroad, where she was received with a ceremony due to her quality, but restricted from the conversation of every one but the spies of this severe guardian, so that it was impossible for her lover even to have a letter delivered into her hands. She languished in this place a considerable time, bore an infinite deal of sickness, and was overwhelmed with the profoundest sorrow. Nature being wearied out with continual distress, and being driven at last to despair, the unfortunate lady, as Mr. Pope justly calls her, put an end to her own life, having bribed a maid servant to procure her a sword. She was found upon the ground weltering in her blood.

The poet, in the Elegy, takes occasion to mingle with the tears of sorrow, just reproaches upon her cruel uncle, who drove her to this violation.

But thou, false guardian of a charge too good,
Thou, mean deserter of thy brother's blood!
See on these ruby lips the trembling breath,
These cheeks now fading at the blast of death:
Cold is that breast which warm'd the world before,
And those love-darting eyes must roll no more.

The conclusion of this elegy is irresistibly affecting.

So peaceful rests, without a stone, a name,
Which once had beauty, titles, wealth, and fame:
How lov'd, how honour'd once, avails thee not,
To whom related, or by whom begot;
A heap of dust alone remains of thee;
'Tis all thou art, and all the proud shall be!

No poem of our author's more deservedly obtained him reputation than his 'Essay on Criticism.' Mr. Addison, in his Spectator, No. 253, has celebrated it with such profuse terms of admiration, that it is really astonishing to find the same man endeavouring afterwards to diminish that fame he had contributed to raise so high.

"The Art of Criticism," says he, "which was published some months ago, is a master-piece in its kind. The observations follow one another, like those in Horace's Art of Poetry, without that methodical regularity which would have been requisite in a prose writer. They are some of them uncommon, but such as the reader must assent to when he sees them explained with that elegance and perspicuity with which they are delivered. As for those which are the most known, and the most received, they are placed in so beautiful a light, and illustrated with such apt allusions, that they have in them all the graces of novelty, and make the reader, who was before acquainted with them, still more convinced of their truth and solidity. And here give me leave to mention what Monsieur Boileau has so well enlarged upon, in the Preface to his Works, that wit and fine writing do not consist so much in advancing things that are new, as in giving things that are

known an agreeable turn. It is impossible for us, who live in the latter ages of the world, to make observations in criticism, morality, or any art and science, which have not been touched upon by others. We have little else left us but to represent the common sense of mankind in more strong, more beautiful, or more uncommon lights. If a reader examines Horace's Art of Poetry, he will find but few precepts in it which he may not meet with in Aristotle, and which were not commonly known by all the poets of the Augustan age. His way of expressing and applying them, not his invention of them, is what we are chiefly to admire.

“ Longinus, in his Reflections, has given us the same kind of sublime which he observes in the several passages which occasioned them. I cannot but take notice that our English author has, after the same manner, exemplified several of his precepts in the very precepts themselves.” He then produces some instances of a particular kind of beauty in the numbers, and concludes with saying, “ That we have three poems in our tongue of the same nature, and each a master-piece in its kind; the Essay on Translated Verse, the Essay on the Art of Poetry, and the Essay on Criticism.”

Addison and Pope were now at the head of poetry and criticism; and both in such a state of elevation, that, like the two rivals in the Roman state, one could no longer bear an equal, nor the other a superior. Of the gradual abatement of kindness between friends, the beginning is often scarcely discernible by themselves, and the process is continued by petty provocations and incivilities, sometimes peevishly returned, and sometimes contemptuously neglected, which would escape all attention but that of pride, and drop from any memory but that of resentment. That the quarrel of these two wits should be minutely deduced, is not to be expected; however, we shall mention such circumstances as are the most material.

The author of *Mist's Journal* positively asserts,

“ that Mr. Addison raised Pope from obscurity, obtained him the acquaintance and friendship of the whole body of our nobility, and transferred his powerful influence with those great men to this rising bard, who frequently levied, by that means, unusual contributions on the public.”

When this charge of ingratitude and dishonour was published against Mr. Pope, to acquit himself of it, he called upon any nobleman whose friendship, or any one gentleman whose subscription, Mr. Addison had procured to our author, to stand forth and declare it, that truth might appear. But the whole libel was proved a malicious story by many persons of distinction, who, several years before Mr. Addison's decease, approved those verses denominated a libel, but which were, it is said, a friendly rebuke, sent privately in our author's own hand, to Mr. Addison, and never made public till by Curl, in his *Miscellanies*, 12mo. 1727. The lines are elegantly satirical, and, in the opinion of many unprejudiced judges, who had opportunities of knowing the character of Mr. Addison, are a good representation of him. Speaking of the poetical triflers of the time, who had declared against him, he makes a sudden transition to Addison,

Peace to all such! But were there one whose fires
True genius kindles, and fair fame inspires,
Blest with each talent and each art to please,
And born to write, converse, and live with ease;
Should such a man, too fond to rule alone,
Bear, like the Turk, no rival near the throne,
View him with scornful, yet with jealous eyes,
And hate for arts that caused himself to rise;
Damn with faint praise, assent with civil leer,
And, without sneering, others teach to sneer;
Willing to wound, and yet afraid to strike,
Just hint a fault, and hesitate dislike;
Alike reserv'd to blame or to commend;
A tim'rous foe, and a suspicious friend;
Dreading e'en fools; by flatterers besieg'd;
And so obliging, that he ne'er oblig'd.
Like Cato, give his little senate laws,
And sit attentive to his own applause;
While wits and Templars ev'ry sentence raise,
And wonder with a foolish face of praise.
Who but must laugh, if such a man there be!
Who would not weep, if Atticus were he!

Some readers may think these lines severe, but the treatment he received from Mr. Addison was more than sufficient to justify them, which will appear when we particularize an interview between these two poetical antagonists, procured by the warm solicitations of Sir Richard Steele, who was present at it, as well as Mr. Gray.

Mr. Jervas being one day in company with Mr. Addison, the conversation turned upon Mr. Pope, for whom Addison, at that time, expressed the highest regard, and assured Mr. Jervas that he would make use, not only of his interest, but of his art likewise, to do Mr. Pope service. He then said, he did not mean his art of poetry, but his art at court, and protested, notwithstanding many insinuations were spread, that it should not be his fault if there was not the best understanding and intelligence between them. He observed, that Dr. Swift might have carried him too far among the enemy during the animosity, but now all was safe, and Mr. Pope, in his opinion, was escaped. When Mr. Jervas communicated this conversation to Mr. Pope, he made this reply: "The friendly office you endeavour to do between Mr. Addison and me deserves acknowledgments on my part. You thoroughly know my regard to his character, and my readiness to testify it by all ways in my power; you also thoroughly knew the meanness of that proceeding of Mr. Phillips, to make a man I so highly value suspect my disposition towards him. But as, after all, Mr. Addison must be judge in what regards himself, and as he has seemed not to be a very just one to me, so I must own to you I expect nothing but civility from him, how much soever I wish for his friendship; and, as for any offers of real kindness or service which it is in his power to do me, I should be ashamed to receive them from a man who has no better opinion of my morals than to think me a party man; nor of my temper, than to believe me capable of maligning or envying another's reputation as a poet. In a word, Mr. Addison is sure of my respect

at all times, and of my real friendship, whenever he shall think fit to know me for what I am."

Some years after this conversation, at the desire of Sir Richard Steele, they met. At first, a very cold civility, and nothing else, appeared on either side; for Mr. Addison had a natural reserve and gloom at the beginning of an evening, which, by conversation and a glass, brightened into an easy cheerfulness. Sir Richard Steele, who was a most social benevolent man, begged of him to fulfil his promise, in dropping all animosity against Mr. Pope. Mr. Pope then desired to be made sensible how he had offended, and observed, that the translation of Homer, if that was the great crime, was undertaken at the request, and almost at the command, of Sir Richard Steele. He entreated Mr. Addison to speak candidly and freely, though it might be with ever so much severity, rather than, by keeping up forms of complaisance, conceal any of his faults. This Mr. Pope spoke in such a manner as plainly indicated he thought Mr. Addison the aggressor, and expected him to condescend, and own himself the cause of the breach between them. But he was disappointed; for Mr. Addison, without appearing to be angry, was quite overcome with it. He began with declaring, that he always had wished him well, had often endeavoured to be his friend, and in that light advised him, if his nature was capable of it, to divest himself of part of his vanity, which was too great for his merit; that he had not arrived yet to that pitch of excellence he might imagine, or think his most partial readers imagined; that when he and Sir Richard Steele corrected his verses, they had a different air; reminding Mr. Pope of the amendment, by Sir Richard, of a line in the poem called the Messiah;

He wipes the tears for ever from our eyes.

Which is taken from the prophet Isaiah,

The Lord God will wipe all tears from off all faces.

From every face he wipes off every tear.

And it stands so altered in the newer editions of Mr. Pope's works. He proceeded to lay before him all the mistakes and inaccuracies hinted at by the writers who had attacked Mr. Pope, and added many things which he himself objected to. Speaking of his translation in general, he said, that he was not to be blamed for endeavouring to get so large a sum of money, but that it was an ill-executed thing, and not equal to Tickell, which had all the spirit of Homer. Mr. Addison concluded, in a low hollow voice of feigned temper, that he was not solicitous about his own fame as a poet; that he had quitted the Muses to enter into the business of the public; and that all he spoke was through friendship to Mr. Pope, whom he advised to have a less exalted sense of his own merit.

Mr. Pope could not well bear such repeated reproaches, but boldly told Mr. Addison, that he appealed from his judgment to the public, and that he had long known him too well to expect any friendship from him; upbraided him with being a pensioner from his youth, sacrificing the very learning purchased by the public money to a mean thirst of power; that he was sent abroad to encourage literature, in place of which he had always endeavoured to suppress merit. At last the contest grew so warm, that they parted without any ceremony; and Mr. Pope, upon this, wrote the foregoing verses.

In this account, and indeed in all other accounts which have been given concerning this quarrel, it does not appear that Mr. Pope was the aggressor. If Mr. Addison entertained suspicions of Mr. Pope's being carried too far among the enemy, the danger was certainly Mr. Pope's, and not Mr. Addison's. It was his misfortune, and not his crime. If Mr. Addison should think himself capable of becoming a rival to Mr. Pope, and, in consequence of this opinion, publish a translation of part of Homer at the same time with Mr. Pope's, and if the public should decide in favour of the latter, by reading his transla-

tion, and neglecting the other, can any fault be imputed to Mr. Pope? Could he be blamed for exerting all his abilities in so arduous a province? And was it his fault that Mr. Addison (for the First Book of Homer was undoubtedly his) could not translate to please the public? Besides, was it not somewhat presumptuous to insinuate to Mr. Pope, that his verses bore another face when he corrected them, while, at the same time, the translation of Homer, which he had never seen in manuscript, bore away the palm from that very translation he himself asserted was done in the true spirit of Homer? In matters of genius the public judgment seldom errs, and in this case posterity has confirmed the sentence of that age which gave the preference to Mr. Pope: for his translation is in the hands of all readers of taste, while the other is seldom regarded but as a foil to Pope's.

It appears as if Mr. Addison was so immersed in party-business as to contract his benevolence to the limits of a faction, which was infinitely beneath the views of a philosopher, and the rules which that excellent writer himself established. If this was the failing of Mr. Addison, it was not the error of Pope, for he kept the strictest correspondence with some persons whose affections to the Whig interest were suspected, yet his name was never called in question. While he was in favour with the Duke of Buckingham, the Lords Bolingbroke, Oxford, and Harcourt, Dr. Swift, and Mr. Prior, he did not drop his correspondence with the Lord Halifax, Mr. Craggs, and most of those who were at the head of the Whig interest. A professed Jacobite one day remonstrated to Mr. Pope, that the people of his party took it ill that he should write with Mr. Steele upon ever so indifferent a subject; at which he could not help smiling, and observed, that he hated narrowness of soul in any party; and that if he renounced his reason in religious matters, he should hardly do it on any other; and that he could pray, not only for opposite parties, but even for opposite religions. Mr. Pope

considered himself as a citizen of the world, and was therefore obliged to pray for the prosperity of mankind in general. As a son of Britain, he wished those councils might be suffered by Providence to prevail which were most for the interest of his native country; but as politics was not his study, he could not always determine, at least with any degree of certainty, whose councils were best; and had charity enough to believe that contending parties might mean well. As taste and science are confined to no country, so ought they not to be excluded from any party; and Mr. Pope had an unexceptionable right to live upon terms of the strictest friendship with every man of genius, to which party soever he might belong. Mr. Pope's judicious conduct towards contending politicians, is demonstrated by his living independent of either faction: he accepted no place, and had too high a spirit to become a pensioner.

Many efforts were made to proselyte Pope from the Popish faith, which all proved ineffectual. His friends conceived hopes, from the moderation which he on all occasions expressed, that he was really a Protestant in his heart, and that upon the death of his mother he would not scruple to declare his sentiments, notwithstanding the reproaches he might incur from the Popish party, and the public observation it would draw upon him. The Bishop of Rochester strongly advised him to read the controverted points between the Protestant and the Catholic church, to suffer his unprejudiced reason to determine for him, and he made no doubt but a separation from the Romish communion would soon ensue. To this Mr. Pope very candidly answered, "Whether the change would be to my spiritual advantage God only knows: this I know, that I mean as well in the religion I now profess, as ever I can do in any other. Can a man who thinks so justify a change, even if he thought both equally good? To such an one the part of joining with any one body of Christians might

perhaps be easy, but I think it would not be so to renounce the other.

“ Your Lordship has formerly advised me to read the best controversies between the Churches. Shall I tell you a secret? I did so at fourteen years old, for I loved reading, and my father had no other books. There was a collection of all that had been written on both sides in the reign of King James II. I warmed my head with them, and the consequence was, I found myself a Papist or a Protestant by turns, according to the last book I read. I am afraid most seekers are in the same case, and when they stop, they are not so properly controverted as outwitted. You see how little glory you would gain by my conversion; and, after all, I verily believe your Lordship and I are both of the same religion, if we were thoroughly understood by one another, and that all honest and reasonable Christians would be so, if they did but talk enough together every day, and had nothing to do together but to serve God, and live in peace with their neighbours.

“ As to the temporal side of the question, I can have no dispute with you; it is certain all the beneficial circumstances of life, and all the shining ones, lie on the part you would invite me to: but if I could bring myself to fancy, what I think you do but fancy, that I have any talents for active life, I want health for it; and besides, it is a real truth, I have, if possible, less inclination than ability. Contemplative life is not only my scene, but is my habit too. I begun my life where most people end theirs, with a disgust of all that the whole world calls ambition. I don't know why it is called so; for, to me, it always seemed to be rather stooping than climbing. I'll tell you my politic and religious sentiments in a few words: in my politics I think no farther than how to preserve my peace of life in any government under which I live; nor in my religion, than to preserve the peace of my conscience in any church with which I communicate. I hope all churches

and all governments are so far of God, as they are rightly understood, and rightly administered; and where they are or may be wrong, I leave it to God alone to mend or reform them, which, whenever he does, it must be by greater instruments than I am. I am not a Papist, for I renounce the temporal invasions of the Papal power, and detest their arrogated authority over princes and states. I am a Catholic in the strictest sense of the word. If I was born under an absolute prince I would be a quiet subject; but I thank God I was not. I have a due sense of the excellence of the British constitution. In a word, the things I have always wished to see are not a Roman Catholic, or a French Catholic, or a Spanish Catholic, but a true Catholic; and not a king of Whigs, or a king of Tories, but a king of England."

These are the peaceful maxims upon which we find Mr. Pope conducted his life; and if they cannot in some respects be justified, yet it must be owned, that his religion and his politics were well enough adapted for a poet, which entitled him to a kind of universal patronage, and to make every good man his friend.

We have already taken notice that Mr. Pope was called upon by the public voice to translate the Iliad, which he performed with so much applause, and, at the same time, with so much profit to himself, that he was envied by many writers whose vanity, perhaps, induced them to believe themselves equal to so great a design. A combination of inferior wits were employed to write the Popiad, in which his translation is characterized as unjust to the original, without beauty of language, or variety of numbers. Instead of the justness of the original, they say there is absurdity and extravagance: instead of the beautiful language of the original, there is solecism and barbarous English. A candid reader may easily discern from this furious introduction, that the critics were actuated rather by malice than truth, and that

they must judge with their eyes shut, who can see no beauty of language, no harmony of numbers, in this translation.

But the most formidable critic against Mr. Pope in this great undertaking was the celebrated Madam Dacier, whom Mr. Pope treated with less ceremony in his Notes on the Iliad, than, in the opinion of some people, was due to her sex. This learned lady was not without a sense of the injury, and took an opportunity of discovering her resentment.

“ Upon finishing,” says she, “ the second édition of my translation of Homer, a particular friend sent me a translation of part of Mr. Pope’s Preface to his version of the Iliad. As I do not understand English, I cannot form any judgment of his performance, though I have heard much of it. I am indeed willing to believe, that the praises it has met with are not unmerited, because whatever work is approved by the English nation cannot be bad; but yet I hope I may be permitted to judge of that part of the preface which has been transmitted to me; and I here take the liberty of giving my sentiments concerning it. I most freely acknowledge that Mr. Pope’s invention is very lively, though he seems to have been guilty of the same fault into which he owns we are often precipitated by our invention, when we depend too much upon the strength of it; as magnanimity, says he, may run up to confusion and extravagance, so may great invention to redundancy and wildness.

“ This has been the very case of Mr. Pope himself; nothing is more overstrained, or more false, than the images in which his fancy has represented Homer. Sometimes he tells us that the Iliad is a wild paradise, where, if he cannot see all the beauties, as in an ordered garden, it is only because the number of them is infinitely greater. Sometimes he compares him to a copious nursery, which contains the seeds and first productions of every kind; and, lastly, he represents him under the notion of a mighty tree,

which rises from the most vigorous seed, is improved with industry, flourishes and produces the finest fruit, but bears too many branches, which might be lopped into form, to give it a more regular appearance.

“What! is Homer’s poem then, according to Mr. Pope, a confused heap of beauties, without order or symmetry, and a plot whereon nothing but seeds, nor nothing perfect is to be found; and a production loaded with many unprofitable things, which ought to be retrenched, and which choak and disfigure those which deserve to be preserved? Mr. Pope will pardon me if I here oppose those comparisons, which to me appear very false, and entirely contrary to what the greatest of ancient and modern critics ever thought.

“The Iliad is so far from being a wild paradise, that it is the most regular garden, and laid out with more symmetry than any ever was. Every thing therein is not only in the place it ought to have been, but every thing is fitted for the place it hath. He presents you, at first, with that which ought to be first seen; he places in the middle what ought to be in the middle, and what would be improperly placed at the beginning or end; and he removes what ought to be at a greater distance, to create the more agreeable surprise; and, to use a comparison drawn from painting, he places that in the greatest light which cannot be too visible, and sinks in the obscurity of the shade what does not require a full view; so that it may be said that Homer is the painter who best knew how to employ the shades and lights. The second comparison is equally unjust: How could Mr. Pope say, ‘that one can only discover seeds, and the first productions of every kind in the Iliad?’ Every beauty is there to such an amazing perfection, that the following ages could add nothing to those of any kind; and the ancients have always proposed Homer as the most perfect model in every kind of poetry.

“ The third comparison is composed of the errors of the two former. Homer had certainly an incomparable fertility of invention, but his fertility is always checked by that just sense which made him reject every superfluous thing which his vast imagination could offer, and to retain only what was necessary and useful. Judgment guided the hand of this admirable gardener, and was the pruning hook he employed to lop off every useless branch.”

Thus far Madam Dacier differs in her opinion from Mr. Pope concerning Homer; but these remarks, which we have just quoted, partake not at all of the nature of criticism; they are mere assertion. Pope has declared Homer to abound with irregular beauties. Dacier has contradicted him, and asserted, that all his beauties are regular; but no reason is assigned by either of these mighty geniuses in support of their opinions, and the reader is left in the dark as to the real truth. If he is to be guided by the authority of a name only, no doubt the argument will preponderate in favour of our countryman. The French lady then proceeds to answer some observations which Mr. Pope made upon her *Remarks on the Iliad*, which she performs with a warmth that generally attends writers of her sex. Mr. Pope, however, paid more regard to this fair antagonist than any other critic upon his works. He confessed that he had received great helps from her, and only thought she had (through a prodigious and almost superstitious fondness for Homer) endeavoured to make him appear without any fault or weakness, and stamp a perfection on his works which is nowhere to be found. He wrote her a very obliging letter, in which he confessed himself exceedingly sorry that he ever should have displeased so excellent an authoress; and she, on the other hand, with a goodness and frankness peculiar to her, protested to forgive it; so that there remained no animosities

between those two great admirers and translators of Homer.

Mr. Pope, by his successful translation of the Iliad, as we have before remarked, drew upon him the envy and raillery of a whole tribe of writers. Though he did not esteem any particular man amongst his enemies of consequence enough to provoke an answer, yet, when they were considered collectively, they offered excellent materials for a general satire. This satire he planned and executed with so extraordinary a mastery, that it is by far the most complete poem of our author's; it is intitled the 'Dunciad,' and discovers more invention, and a higher effort of genius, than any other production of his. The hint was taken from Mr. Dryden's Mac Flecknoe; but as it is more general, so it is more pleasing.

The Dunciad has been so universally read, that we reckon it superfluous to give any further account of it here; and it would be an unpleasing task to trace all the provocations and resentments which were mutually discovered upon this occasion. Mr. Pope was of opinion that, next to praising good writers, there was a merit in exposing bad ones; though it does not hold infallibly true, that each person stigmatized as a dunce was genuinely so. Something must be allowed to personal resentment. Mr. Pope was a man of keen passions; he felt an injury strongly, retained a long remembrance of it, and could very pungently repay it. Some of the gentlemen, however, who had been more severely lashed than the rest, meditated a revenge which redounds but little to their honour. They either intended to chastise him corporally, or gave it out that they had really done so, in order to bring shame upon Mr. Pope, which, if true, could only bring shame upon themselves.

The Dunciad, in the complete edition, is addressed to Dr. Swift. Of the notes, part were written by Dr. Arbuthnot; and an apologetical Letter was prefixed,

signed by Cleland, but supposed to have been written by Pope.

After this general war upon Dullness, he seems to have indulged himself awhile in tranquillity; but his subsequent productions prove that he was not idle. He published (1731) a poem on 'Taste,' in which he very particularly and severely criticises the house, the furniture, the gardens, and the entertainments, of Timon, a man of great wealth and little taste. By Timon he was universally supposed to mean the Duke of Chandos; a man, perhaps, too much delighted with pomp and show, but of a temper kind and beneficent, and who had consequently the voice of the public in his favour.

A violent outcry was therefore raised against the ingratitude and treachery of Pope, who was said to have been indebted to the patronage of Chandos for a thousand pounds, and who gained the opportunity of insulting him by the kindness of his invitation.

The receipt of the thousand pounds Pope publicly denied; but from the reproach which the attack on a character so amiable brought upon him, he tried all means of escaping. The name of Cleland was again employed in an apology, by which no man was satisfied; and he was at last reduced to shelter his temerity behind dissimulation, and endeavour to make that disbelieved which he never had the confidence openly to deny. He wrote an exculpatory letter to the Duke, which was answered with great magnanimity, as by a man who accepted his excuse without believing his professions. He said, that to have ridiculed his taste, or his buildings, had been an indifferent action in another man; but that in Pope, after the reciprocal kindness that had been exchanged between them, it had been less easily excused.

The following year deprived Pope of Gay, a man whom he had known early, and whom he seemed to love with more tenderness than any other of his literary friends. Pope was now forty-four years old;

an age at which the mind begins less easily to admit new confidence, and the will to grow less flexible, and when, therefore, the departure of an old friend is very acutely felt.

In the next year he lost his mother, not by an unexpected death, for she had lasted to the age of ninety-three; but she did not die unlamented. The filial piety of Pope was in the highest degree amiable and exemplary; his parents had the happiness of living till he was at the summit of poetical reputation, till he was at ease in his fortune, and without a rival in his fame, and found no diminution of his respect or tenderness. Whatever was his pride, to them he was obedient; and whatever was his irritability, to them he was gentle. Life has, among its soothing and quiet comforts, few things better to give than such a son.

In 1733 he published the first part of the 'Essay on Man.' This poem had a form and title with which its readers were unacquainted. Its reception was not uniform; some thought it a very imperfect piece, though not without good lines. While the author was unknown, some, as will always happen, favoured him as an adventurer, and some censured him as an intruder; but all thought him above neglect; the sale increased, and editions were multiplied. The second and third parts were soon after published; and, in 1734, the fourth; when Pope avowed himself the author, and claimed the honour of a moral poet.

About this time Warburton began to make his appearance in the first ranks of learning. He was a man of vigorous faculties, a mind fervid and vehement, supplied by incessant and unlimited enquiry, with wonderful extent and variety of knowledge, which yet had not oppressed his imagination, nor clouded his perspicacity. To every work he brought a memory full fraught, together with a fancy fertile of original combinations, and at once he exerted the powers of the scholar, the reasoner, and the wit.

But his knowledge was too multifarious to be always exact, and his pursuits too eager to be always cautious. His abilities gave him an haughty confidence, which he disdained to conceal or moderate; and his impatience of opposition disposed him to treat his adversaries with such contemptuous superiority as made his readers commonly his enemies, and excited against the advocate the wishes of some who favoured the cause. He seems to have adopted the Roman Emperor's determination, *oderint dum metuant*: he used no allurements of gentle language, but wished to compel rather than persuade.

His style is copious without selection, and forcible without neatness; he took the words that presented themselves: his diction is coarse and impure, and his sentences are unmeasured.

He had, in the early part of his life, pleased himself with the notice of inferior wits, and corresponded with the enemies of Pope. A Letter was produced, when he had perhaps himself forgot it, in which he tells Concanen, "Dryden, I observe, borrows for want of leisure, and Pope for want of genius; Milton out of pride, and Addison out of modesty." And when Theobald published 'Shak-speare,' in opposition to Pope, the best notes were supplied by Warburton.

But the time was now come when Warburton was to change his opinion; and Pope was to find a defender in him who had contributed so much to the exaltation of his rival.

The arrogance of Warburton excited against him every artifice of offence, and therefore it may be supposed that his union with Pope was censured as hypocritical inconstancy; but surely to think differently, at different times, of poetical merit, may be easily allowed. Such opinions are often admitted and dismissed, without nice examination. Who is there that has not found reason for changing his mind about questions of greater importance?

Warburton, whatever was his motive, from month

to month, continued a vindication of the Essay on Man, in the literary journal of that time, called 'The Republic of Letters.'

From this time Pope lived in the closest intimacy with Warburton, and amply rewarded his kindness and his zeal; for he introduced him to Mr. Murray, by whose interest he became preacher at Lincoln's Inn, and to Mr. Allen, who gave him his niece and his estate, and by consequence a bishopric. When he died, he left him the property of his works; a legacy which may be reasonably estimated at four thousand pounds.

Pope lived at this time *among the Great*, with that reception and respect to which his works entitled him, and which he had not impaired by any private misconduct or factious partiality.

He published from time to time (between 1730 and 1740) Imitations of different Poems of Horace, generally with his name, and once, as was suspected, without it.

This mode of imitation, in which the ancients are familiarised, by adapting their sentiments to modern topics, by making Horace say of Shakspeare what he originally said of Ennius, and accommodating his satires on Pantolabus and Nomentanus to the flatterers and prodigals of our own time, was first practised in the reign of Charles the Second by Oldham and Rochester. It is a kind of middle composition between translation and original design, which pleases when the thoughts are unexpectedly applicable, and the parallels lucky. It seems to have been Pope's favourite amusement; for he has carried it further than any former poet.

His last Satires, of the general kind, were two Dialogues, named, from the year in which they were published, "Seventeen Hundred and Thirty-eight." In these poems many are praised, and many are reproached. Pope was then entangled in the opposition; a follower of the Prince of Wales, who dined at his house, and the friend of many who

obstructed and censured the conduct of the ministers. His political partiality was too plainly shewn: he forgot the prudence with which he passed, in his earlier years, uninjured and unoffending, through much more violent conflicts of faction.

Pope now added, at Warburton's request, another book to the *Dunciad*, of which the design is to ridicule such studies as are either hopeless or useless, as either pursue what is unattainable, or what, if it be attained, is of no use.

When this book was printed (1742), the laurel had been for some time upon the head of Cibber; a man whom it cannot be supposed that Pope could regard with much kindness or esteem, though in one of the imitations of Horace he has liberally praised the 'Careless Husband.' In the *Dunciad*, among other worthless scribblers, he had mentioned Cibber; who, in his 'Apology,' complains of the great poet's unkindness as more injurious, "because," says he, "I have never offended him."

It might have been expected that Pope should have been, in some degree, mollified by this submissive gentleness, but no such consequence appeared. Though he condescended to commend Cibber once, he mentioned him afterwards contemptuously in one of his satires, and again in his epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot; and in the fourth book of the *Dunciad*, attacked him with acrimony, to which the provocation is not easily discoverable. Perhaps he imagined that, in ridiculing the laureat, he satirised those by whom the laurel had been given, and gratified that ambitious petulance, with which he affected to insult the great.

The severity of this satire left Cibber no longer any patience. He had confidence enough in his own powers to believe that he could disturb the quiet of his adversary, and doubtless did not want instigators, who, without any care about the victory, desired to amuse themselves by looking on the contest. He therefore gave the town a pamphlet, in which

he declares his resolution from that time never to bear another blow without returning it, and to tire out his adversary by perseverance, if he cannot conquer him by strength.

The incessant and unappeasable malignity of Pope he imputes to a very distant cause. After the 'Three Hours after Marriage' had been driven off the stage, by the offence which the mummy and crocodile gave the audience, while the exploded scene was yet fresh in memory, it happened that Cibber played Bayes in the Rehearsal; and, as it had been usual to enliven the part by the mention of any recent theatrical transactions, he said, that he once thought to have introduced his lovers disguised in a mummy and a crocodile. "This," says he, "was received with loud claps, which indicated contempt of the play." Pope, who was behind the scenes, meeting him as he left the stage, attacked him, as he says, with all the virulence of a man out of his senses; to which he replied, that he would take no other notice of what was said by so particular a man than to declare, that, as often as he played that part, he would repeat the same provocation.

Of all our poet's writings none were read with more general approbation than his Ethic Epistles, or multiplied into more editions. Mr. Pope, who was a perfect economist, secured to himself the profits arising from his own works.

But now approaches the period in which, as he himself expressed it, he stood in need of the generous tear he paid:

Poets themselves must fall, like those they sung;
Deaf the prais'd ear, and mute the tuneful tongue,
Ev'n he whose soul now melts in mournful lays,
Shall shortly want the gen'rous tear he pays.

Mr. Pope, who had been always subjected to a variety of bodily infirmities, finding his strength decline, began to think that his days, which had been prolonged past his expectation, were drawing towards

a conclusion. He visited the Hot-Wells at Bristol, where, for some time, there were small hopes of his recovery; but making too free with purges, he grew worse, and seemed desirous to draw nearer home. A dropsy in the breast at last put a period to his life at the age of fifty-six, on the 30th of May, 1744, at his house at Twickenham, where he was interred in the same grave with his father and mother.

Mr. Pope's behaviour in his last illness has been variously represented to the world; some have affirmed that it was timid and peevish; that, having been fixed in no particular system of faith, his mind was wavering, and his temper broken and disturbed. Others have asserted, that he was all chearfulness and resignation to the Divine Will. Which of these opinions is true we cannot now determine; but if the former, it must be regretted that he who had taught philosophy to others, should himself be destitute of its assistance in the most critical moments of his life.

The bulk of his fortune he bequeathed to Mrs. Blount, with whom he lived in the strictest friendship, and for whom he is said to have entertained the warmest affection. His works, which are in the hands of every person of true taste, and will last as long as our language will be understood, render unnecessary all further remarks on his writings. He was equally admired for the dignity and sublimity of his moral and philosophical works, the vivacity of his satirical, the clearness and propriety of his didactic, the richness and variety of his descriptive, and the elegance of all, added to a harmony of versification, and correctness of sentiment and language, unknown to our former poets, and of which he has set an example, which will be an example or a reproach to his successors. His prose style is as perfect in its kind as his poetic, and has all the beauties proper for it, joined to an uncommon force and perspicuity.

Under the profession of the Roman Catholic reli-

gion, to which he adhered to the last, he maintained all the moderation and charity becoming the most thorough and consistent Protestant. His conversation was natural, easy, and agreeable, without any affectation of displaying his wit, or obtruding his own judgment, even upon subjects of which he was so eminently a master.

The moral character of our author, as it did not escape the lash of his calumniators in his life, so have there been attempts since his death to diminish his reputation. Lord Bolingbroke, whom Mr. Pope esteemed to almost an enthusiastic degree of admiration, was the first to make this attack. Not many years ago the public were entertained with this controversy, immediately upon the publication of his Lordship's Letters on the Spirit of Patriotism, and the Idea of a Patriot King. Different opinions have been offered; some to extenuate the fault of Mr. Pope for printing and mutilating these letters without his Lordship's knowledge; others to blame him for it as the highest breach of friendship, and the greatest mark of dishonour: but it would exceed our proposed bounds to enter into the merits of this controversy.

This great man is allowed to have been one of the first rank amongst the poets of our nation, and to acknowledge the superiority of none but Shakspeare, Milton, and Dryden. With the two former it is unnatural to compare him, as their province in writing is so very different. Pope has never attempted the drama, nor published an epic poem, in which these two distinguished geniuses have so wonderfully succeeded. Though Pope's genius was great, it was yet of so different a cast from Shakspeare's and Milton's, that no comparison can be justly formed. But if this may be said of the former two, it will by no means hold with respect to the latter; for between him and Dryden there is a great similarity of writing, and a very striking coincidence of genius. It will not, perhaps, be displeasing to our readers,

if we pursue this comparison, and endeavour to discover to whom the superiority is justly to be attributed, and to which of them poetry owes the highest obligations.

When Dryden came into notice he found poetry in a very imperfect state; its numbers were unpolished, its cadences rough, and there was nothing of harmony or melliflence to give it a graceful flow. In this harsh, unmusical situation Dryden found it, (for the refinements of Waller were but puerile and unsubstantial:) he polished the rough diamond, he taught it to shine, and connected beauty, elegance, and strength, in all his poetical compositions. Though Dryden thus polished our English numbers, and thus harmonized versification, it cannot be said that he carried his art to perfection. Much was yet left undone; his lines, with all their smoothness, were often rambling, and expetives were frequently introduced to complete his measures. It is apparent, therefore, that an additional harmony might still be given to our numbers, and that cadences were yet capable of a more musical modulation. To effect this purpose Mr. Pope arose, who, with an ear elegantly delicate, and the advantage of the finest genius, so harmonized the English numbers, as to make them completely musical. His numbers are likewise so minutely correct, that it would be difficult to conceive how any of his lines can be altered to advantage. He has created a kind of mechanical versification; every line is alike; and though they are sweetly musical, they want diversity; for he has not studied so great a variety of pauses, and where the accents may be laid gracefully. The structure of his verse is the best, and a line of his is more musical than any other line can be made by placing the accents elsewhere; but we are not quite certain whether the ear is not apt to be soon cloyed with this uniformity of elegance, this sameness of harmony. It must be acknowledged, however, that he has much improved upon Dryden in the article

of versification, and in that part of poetry is greatly his superior. But though this must be acknowledged, perhaps it will not necessarily follow, that his genius was therefore superior.

The grand characteristic of a poet is his invention, the surest distinction of a great genius. In Mr. Pope nothing is so truly original as his Rape of the Lock, nor discovers so much invention. In this kind of mock-heroic he is without a rival in our language, for Dryden has written nothing of the kind. His other work which discovers invention, fine designing, and admirable execution, is his Dunciad: which, though built on Dryden's Mac Flecknoc, is yet so much superior, that, in satiric writing, the palm must justly be yielded to him. In Mr. Dryden's Absalom and Achitophel there are, indeed, the most poignant strokes of satire, and characters drawn with the most masterly touches; but this poem, with all its excellences, is much inferior to the Dunciad, though Dryden had advantages which Mr. Pope had not; for Dryden's characters are men of great eminence and figure in the state, while Pope has to expose men of obscure birth and unimportant lives, only distinguished from the herd of mankind by a glimmering of genius, which rendered the greatest part of them more emphatically contemptible. Pope's was the hardest task, and he has executed it with the greatest success. As Mr. Dryden must undoubtedly have yielded to Pope in satiric writing, it is incumbent on the partizans of Dryden to name another species of composition, in which the former excels, so as to throw the balance again upon the side of Dryden. This species is the Lyric, in which the warmest votaries of Pope must certainly acknowledge that he is as much inferior: as an irresistible proof of this we need only compare Mr. Dryden's Ode on St. Cecilia's Day with Mr. Pope's, in which the disparity is very apparent.

It hath been generally acknowledged, that the

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Lyric is a more excellent kind of writing than the Satiric, and, consequently, he who excels in the most excellent species must undoubtedly be esteemed the greatest poet. Mr. Pope has very happily succeeded in many of his occasional pieces, such as *Eloisa to Abelard*, his *Elegy on an unfortunate young Lady*, and a variety of other performances deservedly celebrated. To these may be opposed Mr. Dryden's *Fables*, which, though written in a very advanced age, are yet the most perfect of his works. In these *Fables* there is, perhaps, a greater variety than in Mr. Pope's occasional pieces: many of them, indeed, are translations, but such as are original show a great extent of invention, and a large compass of genius.

There are not in Pope's works such poignant discoveries of wit, or such a general knowledge of the humours and characters of men, as in the *Prologues* and *Epilogues* of Dryden, which are the best records of the whims and capricious oddities of the times in which they are written.

When these two great geniuses are considered in the light of translators, it will indeed be difficult to determine into whose scale the balance should be thrown. That Mr. Pope had a more arduous province in doing justice to Homer, than Dryden with regard to Virgil, is certainly true, as Homer is a more various and diffuse poet than Virgil; and it is likewise true, that Pope has even exceeded Dryden in the execution, and none will deny that Pope's *Homer's Iliad* is a finer poem than Dryden's *Æneid* of Virgil, making a proper allowance for the disproportion of the original authors. But then a candid critic should reflect, that as Dryden was prior in the great attempt of rendering Virgil into English, so did he perform the task under many disadvantages which Pope, by a happier situation in life, was enabled to avoid: and could not but improve upon Dryden's errors, though the authors translated were not the same: and it is much to be doubted, if

Dryden were to translate the *Æneid* now, with that attention which the correctness of the present age would force upon him, whether the preference would be due to Pope's Homer.

But supposing it to be yielded (as it certainly must) that the latter bard was the greatest translator, we are now to throw into Mr. Dryden's scale all his dramatic works; which, though not the most excellent of his writings, yet, as nothing of Mr. Pope's can be opposed to them, they have an undoubted right to turn the balance greatly in favour of Mr. Dryden. When the two poets are considered as critics, the comparison will very imperfectly hold. Dryden's Dedications and Prefaces, besides that they are more numerous, and are the best models for courtly panegyric, shew that he understood poetry as an art beyond any man that ever lived; and he explained this art so well, that he taught his antagonists to turn the tables against himself: for he so illuminated the mind by his clear and perspicuous reasoning, that dullness itself became capable of discerning; and when at any time his performances fell short of his own ideas of excellence, his enemies tried him by rules of his own establishing; and though they owed to him the ability of judging, they seldom had candour enough to spare him.

Perhaps it may be true, that Pope's works are read with more appetite, as there is a greater evenness and correctness in them; but in perusing the works of Dryden, the mind will take a wider range, and be more fraught with poetical ideas. We admire Dryden as the greater genius, and Pope as the most pleasing versifier.

ENCOMIUMS ON POPE.

ON MR. POPE AND HIS POEMS.

By John Sheffield, Duke of Buckingham.

WITH age decay'd, with courts and bus'ness tir'd,
Caring for nothing but what ease requir'd;
Too dully serious for the Muse's sport,
And from the critics safe arriv'd in port;
I little thought of launching forth again,
Amidst advent'rous rovers of the pen;
And after so much undeserv'd success,
Thus hazarding at last to make it less.

5

Encomiums suit not this censorious time,
Itself a subject for satiric rhyme;
Ignorance honour'd, wit and worth defam'd,
Folly triumphant, and e'en Homer blam'd!
But to this genius, join'd with so much art,
Such various learning mix'd in ev'ry part,
Poets are bound a loud applause to pay;
Apollo bids it, and they must obey.

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And yet so wonderful, sublime a thing,
As the great Iliad, scarce could make me sing;
Except I justly could at once commend
A good companion, and as firm a friend.
One moral, or a mere well-natur'd deed,
Can all desert in sciences exceed,
'Tis great delight to laugh at some mens' ways,
But a much greater to give merit praise.

20

TO MR. POPE.

By Dr. Parnell.

To praise, and still with just respect to praise
A bard triumphant in immortal bays,
The learn'd to shew, the sensible commend,
Yet still preserve the province of the friend;
What life, what vigour, must the lines require!
What music tune them, what affection fire!

5

O might thy genius in my bosom shine,
Thou shouldst not fail of numbers worthy thine;
The brightest Ancients might at once agree
To sing within my lays, and sing of thee.

10

Horace himself would own thou dost excel
In candid arts to play the critic well.

Ovid himself might wish to sing the dame
Whom Windsor Forest sees a gliding stream;
On silver feet, with annual osier crown'd, 15
She runs for ever through poetic ground.

How flame the glories of Belinda's hair,
Made by thy Muse the envy of the fair!
Less shone the tresses Egypt's princess wore,
Which sweet Callimachus so sung before. 20

Here courtly trifles set the world at odds;
Belles war with beaus, and whims descend for gods.
The new machines, in names of ridicule,
Mock the grave frenzy of the chemic fool.
But know, ye Fair, a point conceal'd with art, 25
The sylphs and gnomes are but a woman's heart.
The graces stand in sight: a satyr-train
Peeps o'er their head, and laughs behind the scene.

In Fame's fair temple, o'er the boldest wits,
Inshrin'd on high, the sacred Virgil sits; 30
And sits in measures such as Virgil's muse,
To place thee near him might be fond to chuse:
How might he tune th' alternate reed with thee!
Perhaps a Strephon thou, a Daphnis he;
While some old Damon, o'er the vulgar wise, 35
Thinks he deserves, and thou deserv'st the prize!
Rapt with the thought, my fancy seeks the plains,
And turns me shepherd while I hear the strains.

Indulgent nurse of ev'ry tender gale,
Parent of flow'rets, old Arcadia, hail! 40

Here in the cool my limbs at ease I spread,
Here let thy poplars whisper o'er my head:
Still slide thy waters, soft among the trees
Thy aspens quiver in a breathing breeze!
Smile, all ye vallies, in eternal spring, 45
Be hush'd ye winds, while Pope and Virgil sing.

In English lays, and all sublimely great,
Thy Homer warms with all his ancient heat;
He shines in council, thunders in the fight,
And flames with ev'ry sense of great delight. 50

Long has that poet reign'd, and long unknown,
 Like monarchs sparkling on a distant throne;
 In all the majesty of Greek retir'd;
 Himself unknown, his mighty name admir'd;
 His language failing, wrapt him round with night;
 Thine, rais'd by thee, recalls the work to light. 56
 So wealthy mines, that ages long before
 Fed the large realms around with golden ore,
 When chok'd by sinking banks, no more appear,
 And Shepherds only say, "The mines were here;" 60
 Should some rich youth (if Nature warm his heart,
 And all his projects stand inform'd with art)
 Here clear the caves, there ope the leading vein,
 The mines detected flame with gold again

How vast, how copious, are thy new designs! 65
 How ev'ry music varies in thy lines!
 Still, as I read, I feel my bosom beat,
 And rise in raptures by another's heat.
 Thus in the wood, when summer dress'd the days,
 While Windsor lent us tuneful hours of ease, 70
 Our ears the lark, the thrush, the turtle blest,
 And Philomela sweetest, o'er the rest:
 The shades resound with song--O softly tread,
 While a whole season warbles round my head.

This to my friend---and when a friend inspires,
 My silent harp its master's hand requires, 76
 Shakes off the dust, and makes these rocks resound;
 For Fortune plac'd me in unfertile ground;
 Far from the joys that with my soul agree,
 From wit, from learning---very far from thee. 80
 Here moss-grown trees expand the smallest leaf;
 Here half an acre's corn is half a sheaf;
 Here hills with naked heads the tempest meet,
 Rocks at their sides, and torrents at their feet;
 Or lazy lakes, unconscious of a flood, 85
 Whose dull brown Naiads ever sleep in mud:
 Yet here content can dwell, and learned ease,
 A friend delight me, and an author please;
 Ev'n here I sing, when Pope supplies the theme;
 Shew my own love, though not increase his fame. 90

PREFACE.

I AM inclined to think that both the writers of books, and the readers of them, are generally not a little unreasonable in their expectations. The first seem to fancy that the world must approve whatever they produce, and the latter to imagine that authors are obliged to please them at any rate. Methinks, as on the one hand no single man is born with a right of controlling the opinions of all the rest, so, on the other, the world has no title to demand that the whole care and time of any particular person should be sacrificed to its entertainment; therefore I cannot but believe that writers and readers are under equal obligations, for as much fame or pleasure as each affords the other.

Every one acknowledges it would be a wild notion to expect perfection in any work of man; and yet one would think the contrary was taken for granted by the judgment commonly passed upon poems. A critic supposes he has done his part, if he proves a writer to have failed in an expression, or erred in any particular point; and can it then be wondered at, if the poets in general seem resolved not to own themselves in any error? For as long as one side will make no allowances, the other will be brought to no acknowledgments.

I am afraid this extreme zeal on both sides is ill-placed; Poetry and Criticism being by no means the universal concern of the world, but only the affair of idle men who write in their closets, and of idle men who read there.

Yet sure, upon the whole, a bad author deserves better usage than a bad critic; for a writer's endeavour, for the most part, is to please his readers, and

he fails merely through the misfortune of an ill judgment; but such a critic's is to put them out of humour; a design he could never go upon without both that and an ill temper.

I think a good deal may be said to extenuate the faults of bad poets. What we call a Genius is hard to be distinguished by a man himself from a strong inclination; and if his genius be ever so great, he cannot at first discover it any other way, than by giving way to that prevalent propensity which renders him the more liable to be mistaken. The only method he has, is to make the experiment by writing, and appealing to the judgment of others. Now, if he happens to write ill (which is certainly no sin in itself), he is immediately made an object of ridicule. I wish we had the humanity to reflect, that even the worst authors might, in their endeavour to please us, deserve something at our hands. We have no cause to quarrel with them but for their obstinacy in persisting to write; and this, too, may admit of alleviating circumstances. Their particular friends may be either ignorant or insincere; and the rest of the world in general is too well-bred to shock them with a truth which generally their booksellers are the first that inform them of. This happens not till they have spent too much of their time to apply to any profession which might better fit their talents, and till such talents as they have are so far discredited as to be of but small service to them. For (what is the hardest case imaginable) the reputation of a man generally depends upon the first steps he makes in the world; and people will establish their opinion of us from what we do at that season when we have least judgment to direct us.

On the other hand, a good poet no sooner communicates his works with the same desire of information, but it is imagined he is a vain young creature, given up to the ambition of fame, when perhaps the poor man is all the while trembling with the fear of

being ridiculous. If he is made to hope he may please the world, he falls under very unlucky circumstances; for, from the moment he prints, he must expect to hear no more truth than if he were a prince or a beauty. If he has not very good sense (and indeed there are twenty men of wit for one man of sense,) his living thus in a course of flattery may put him in no small danger of becoming a coxcomb; if he has, he will, consequently, have so much diffidence as not to reap any great satisfaction from his praise; since, if it be given to his face, it can scarce be distinguished from flattery; and if in his absence, it is hard to be certain of it. Were he sure to be commended by the best and most knowing, he is as sure of being envied by the worst and most ignorant, which are the majority; for it is with a fine genius as with a fine fashion, all those are displeased at it who are not able to follow it; and it is to be feared that esteem will seldom do any man so much good as ill-will does him harm. Then there is a third class of people, who make the largest part of mankind, those of ordinary or indifferent capacities, and these, to a man, will hate or suspect him; a hundred honest gentlemen will dread him as a wit, and a hundred innocent women as a satirist. In a word, whatever be his fate in poetry, it is ten to one but he must give up all the reasonable aims of life for it. There are, indeed, some advantages accruing from a genius to poetry, and they are all I can think of; the agreeable power of self-amusement when a man is idle or alone; the privilege of being admitted into the best company; and the freedom of saying as many careless things as other people, without being so severely remarked upon.

I believe if any one, early in his life, should contemplate the dangerous fate of authors, he would scarce be of their number on any consideration. The life of a wit is a warfare upon earth; and the present spirit of the learned world is such, that to attempt

to serve it, any way, one must have the constancy of a martyr, and a resolution to suffer for its sake. I could wish people would believe, what I am pretty certain they will not, that I have been much less concerned about fame than I durst declare till this occasion, when, methinks, I should find more credit than I could heretofore, since my writings have had their fate already, and it is too late to think of prepossessing the reader in their favour. I would plead it as some merit in me, that the world has never been prepared for these trifles by prefaces, biassed by recommendation, dazzled with the names of great patrons, wheedled with fine reasons and pretences, or troubled with excuses. I confess it was want of consideration that made me an author: I writ, because it amused me; I corrected, because it was as pleasant to me to correct as to write; and I published, because I was told I might please such as it was a credit to please. To what degree I have done this I am really ignorant: I had too much fondness for my productions to judge of them at first, and too much judgment to be pleased with them at last; but I have reason to think they can have no reputation which will continue long, or which deserves to do so; for they have always fallen short, not only of what I read of others, but even of my own ideas of poetry.

If any one should imagine I am not in earnest, I desire him to reflect, that the Ancients (to say the least of them) had as much genius as we; and that to take more pains, and employ more time, cannot fail to produce more complete pieces. They constantly applied themselves not only to that art, but to that single branch of an art to which their talent was most powerfully bent; and it was the business of their lives to correct and finish their works for posterity. If we can pretend to have used the same industry, let us expect the same immortality; though, if we took the same care, we should still lie under

a further misfortune; they writ in languages that became universal and everlasting, while ours are extremely limited both in extent and in duration. A mighty foundation for our pride! when the utmost we can hope is but to be read in one island, and to be thrown aside at the end of one age.

All that is left us is to recommend our productions by the imitation of the Ancients:—and it will be found true, that, in every age, the highest character for sense and learning has been obtained by those who have been most indebted to them. For, to say truth, whatever is very good sense, must have been common sense in all times; and what we call Learning, is but the knowledge of the sense of our predecessors. Therefore they who say our thoughts are not our own, because they resemble the Ancients, may as well say our faces are not our own, because they are like our fathers; and indeed it is very unreasonable that people should expect us to be scholars, and yet be angry to find us so.

I fairly confess that I have served myself all I could by reading; that I made use of the judgment of authors dead and living; that I omitted no means in my power to be informed of my errors, both by my friends and enemies; but the true reason these pieces are not more correct, is owing to the consideration how short a time they and I have to live: one may be ashamed to consume half one's days in bringing sense and rhyme together; and what critic can be so unreasonable, as not to leave a man time enough for any more serious employment, or more agreeable amusement?

The only plea I shall use for the favour of the public is, that I have as great a respect for it as most authors have for themselves; and that I have sacrificed much of my own self-love for its sake, in preventing not only many mean things from seeing the light, but many which I thought tolerable. I would not be like those authors who forgive themselves

some particular lines for the sake of a whole poem, and, *vice versa*, a whole poem for the sake of some particular lines. I believe no one qualification is so likely to make a good writer as the power of rejecting his own thoughts; and it must be this, if any thing, that can give me a chance to be one. For what I have published I can only hope to be pardoned; but for what I have burned I deserve to be praised. On this account the world is under some obligation to me, and owes me the justice, in return, to look upon no verses as mine that are not inserted in this Collection. And perhaps nothing could make it worth my while to own what are really so, but to avoid the imputation of so many dull and immoral things as, partly by malice, and partly by ignorance, have been ascribed to me. I must further acquit myself of the presumption of having lent my name to recommend any miscellanies or works of other men; a thing I never thought becoming a person who has hardly credit enough to answer for his own.

In this office of collecting my pieces, I am altogether uncertain whether to look upon myself as a man building a monument, or burying the dead.

If time shall make it the former, may these poems, as long as they last, remain as a testimony that their author never made his talents subservient to the mean and unworthy ends of party or self-interest; the gratification of public prejudices or private passions; the flattery of the undeserving, or the insult of the unfortunate. If I have written well, let it be considered, that it is what no man can do without good sense, a quality that not only renders one capable of being a good writer, but a good man. And if I have made any acquisition in the opinion of any one under the notion of the former, let it be continued to me under no other title than that of the latter.

But if this publication be only a more solemn fu-

neral of my remains, I desire it may be known that I die in charity, and in my senses; without any murmurs against the justice of this age, or any mad appeals to posterity. I declare, I shall think the world in the right, and quietly submit to every truth which time shall discover to the prejudice of these writings; not so much as wishing so irrational a thing, as that every body should be deceived merely for my credit. However, I desire it may then be considered, that there are very few things in this Collection which were not written under the age of five and twenty; so that my youth may be made (as it never fails to be in executions) a case of compassion; that I never was so concerned about my works as to vindicate them in print, believing, if any thing was good, it would defend itself, and what was bad could never be defended; that I used no artifice to raise or continue a reputation, depreciated no dead author I was obliged to, bribed no living one with unjust praise, insulted no adversary with ill language; or, when I could not attack a rival's works, encouraged reports against his morals. To conclude, if this volume perish, let it serve as a warning to the critics not to take too much pains for the future to destroy such things as will die of themselves; and a *memento mori* to some of my vain contemporaries the poets, to teach them that, when real merit is wanting, it avails nothing to have been encouraged by the great, commended by the eminent, and favoured by the public in general.

Nov. 10, 1716.



PASTORALS.

WRITTEN IN THE YEAR 1704.

Rura mihi et rigui placeant in vallibus amnes,
Flumina amem, sylvasque, inglorius! *Virg.*

DISCOURSE ON PASTORAL POETRY*.

THERE are not, I believe, a greater number of any sort of verses than of those which are called Pastorals, nor a smaller, than of those which are truly so. It therefore seems necessary to give some account of this kind of Poem; and it is my design to comprise in this short paper, the substance of those numerous dissertations the critics have made on the subject, without omitting any of their rules in my own favour: you will also find some points reconciled, about which they seem to differ, and a few remarks which, I think, have escaped their observation.

The original of poetry is ascribed to that age which succeeded the creation of the world; and as the keeping of flocks seems to have been the first employment of mankind, the most ancient sort of poetry was probably Pastoral†. It is natural to imagine, that the leisure of those ancient shepherds admitting and inviting some diversion, none was so proper to that solitary and sedentary life as singing; and that in their songs they took occasion to celebrate their own felicity. From hence a poem was invented, and afterwards improved to a perfect image of that happy time; which, by giving us an esteem for the virtues of a former age, might recommend them to the present. And since the life of shepherds was attended with more tranquillity than any other rural employment the poets chose to introduce their persons, from whom it received the name of Pastoral.

A Pastoral is an imitation of the action of a shepherd, or one considered under that character. The form of this imitation is dramatic, or narrative, or mixed of both‡; the fable is simple, the manners not too polite nor too rustic; the thoughts are plain, yet

* Written at sixteen years of age. P.

† Fontenelle's Discourse on Pastorals. P.

‡ Heinsius in Theocr. P.



POPE.

Let me, O let me, to the shades repair,
My native shades—there weep, & murmur there;
She said, and melting as in tears she lay,
In a soft silver stream, dissolv'd away.

The Windsor Forest Vol. Ep. 68. l. 20.



Ye weeping Loves, the stream with myrtles hide
 And break your bows, as when Adonis dy'd,
 And with your golden darts now useless grown
 Inscribe a verse on this relentless stone.
Pope's Poems Vide Winter, Pastoral 1. Vol. I. Line 23. Page 61.

Designed by A. Corbould Engraved by R. Satchell & Co. Printed by J. Saunders 1801.



POPE'S POEMS.

Belinda still her downy pillow prest,
Her guardian sylph prolonged the balmy rest.
See Rape of the Lock, Line 19 Page 82.

Printed by J. Smith, Printer, at the Sun in St. Paul's Church-yard.

Printed for C. Cooke, Alder Street, 1787.



POPE'S POEMS.

Say lovely youth that doth my heart command
Can Phaon's eyes forget his Sappho's hand?
Must then her name the wretched writer prove
To thy remembrance lost as to thy love?

*See Sappho to Phaon Page 281 lines 1-4.
Printed by K. L. & Co. London by W. B. & Co.*



POPE'S POEMS.
To her the shady grove the flow'ry field,
The stream & fountains no delight could yield.
Twas all her joy the rip'ning fruits to rend,
And see the boughs with happy burthens bend.
Vide Vertumnus & Pomona Vol. I. Page 228. line 5.
Painted by Kirk Engraved by Kellcy
for C. Drolow Sep 23 1707.

admit a little quickness and passion, but that short and flowing: the expression humble, yet as pure as the language will afford; neat, but not florid; easy, and yet lively. In short, the fable, manners, thoughts, and expressions, are full of the greatest simplicity in nature.

The complete character of this Poem consists in simplicity*, brevity, and delicacy; the two first of which render an eclogue natural, and the last delightful.

If we would copy Nature, it may be useful to take this idea along with us, that Pastoral is an image of what they call the Golden Age: so that we are not to describe our shepherds as shepherds at this day really are, but as they may be conceived then to have been when the best of men followed the employment. To carry this resemblance yet further, it would not be amiss to give these shepherds some skill in astronomy, as far as it may be useful to that sort of life: and an air of piety to the gods should shine through the poem, which so visibly appears in all the works of antiquity; and it ought to preserve some relish of the old way of writing: the connection should be loose, the narrations and descriptions short†, and the periods concise. Yet it is not sufficient that the sentences only be brief; the whole eclogue should be so too: for we cannot suppose poetry in those days to have been the business of men, but their recreation at vacant hours.

But, with a respect to the present age, nothing more conduces to make these composures natural, than when some knowledge in rural affairs is discovered‡. This may be made to appear rather done by chance than on design, and sometimes is best shewn by inference; lest by too much study to seem natural, we destroy that easy simplicity from whence arises the delight. For what is inviting in this sort of poetry proceeds not so much from the idea of that business, as of the tranquillity of a country life.

We must therefore use some illusion to render a pas-

* Rapin de Carm. Past. p. 2. P.

† Rapin, Reflex. sur l'Art. Poet. d'Arist. p. 2. Refl. xxvii. P.

‡ Pref. to Virg. Past. in Dryd. Virg. P.

toral delightful; and this consists in exposing the best side only of a shepherd's life, and in concealing its miseries*. Nor is it enough to introduce shepherds discoursing together in a natural way; but a regard must be had to the subject; that it contain some particular beauty in itself, and that it be different in every eclogue. Besides, in each of them a designed scene or prospect is to be presented to our view, which should likewise have its variety†. This variety is obtained, in a great degree, by frequent comparisons, drawn from the most agreeable objects of the country; by interrogations to things inanimate; by beautiful digressions, but those short; sometimes by insisting a little on circumstances; and, lastly, by elegant turns on the words, which render the numbers extremely sweet and pleasing. As for the numbers themselves, tho' they are properly of the heroic measure, they should be the smoothest, the most easy and flowing imaginable.

It is by rules like these that we ought to judge of Pastoral: and since the instructions given for any art are to be delivered as that art is in perfection, they must of necessity be derived from those in whom it is acknowledged so to be. It is therefore from the practice of Theocritus and Virgil (the only undisputed authors of Pastoral) that the critics have drawn the foregoing notions concerning it.

Theocritus excels all others in nature and simplicity. The subjects of his Idyllia are purely pastoral; but he is not so exact in his persons, having introduced reapers‡ and fishermen as well as shepherds. He is apt to be too long in his descriptions, of which that of the cup, in the first Pastoral, is a remarkable instance. In the manners he seems a little defective; for his swains are sometimes abusive and immodest, and perhaps too much inclining to rusticity: for instance, in his fourth and fifth Idyllia. But it is enough that all others learned their excellencies from him, and that his dialect alone has a secret charm in it, which no other could ever attain.

* Fontenelle's Disc. of Past. P.

† See the forementioned Preface. P.

‡ Θεισται, Idyl. x. and Αλιεις, Idyl. xxi. P.

Virgil, who copies Theocritus, refines upon his original; and in all points where judgment is principally concerned, he is much superior to his master. Though some of his subjects are not pastoral in themselves, but only seem to be such, they have a wonderful variety in them, which the Greek was a stranger to*. He exceeds him in regularity and brevity, and falls short of him in nothing but simplicity and propriety of stile; the first of which, perhaps, was the fault of his age, and the last of his language.

Among the moderns their success has been greatest who have most endeavoured to make these ancients their pattern. The most considerable genius appears in the famous Tasso and our Spenser. Tasso, in his *Aminta*, has as far excelled all the pastoral writers, as, in his *Gierusalemme*, he has outdone the epic poets of his country. But as this piece seems to have been the original of a new sort of poem, the Pastoral Comedy, in Italy, it cannot so well be considered as a copy of the Ancients. Spenser's *Calendar*, in Mr. Dryden's opinion, is the most complete work of this kind which any nation has produced ever since the time of Virgil†. Not but that he may be thought imperfect in some few points. His eclogues are somewhat too long, if we compare them with the Ancients: he is sometimes too allegorical, and treats of matters of religion in a pastoral style, as the Mantuan had done before him. He has employed the Lyric measure, which is contrary to the practice of the old poets. His stanza is not still the same, nor always well chosen. This last may be the reason his expression is sometimes not concise enough; for the tetrastic has obliged him to extend his sense to the length of four lines, which would have been more closely confined in the couplet.

In the manners, thoughts, and characters, he comes near to Theocritus himself; though, notwithstanding all the care he has taken, he is certainly inferior in his dialect; for the Doric had its beauty and propriety in

* Rapin *Refl. on Arist.* part. ii. *Refl.* xxvii-----*Pref. to the Ecl.* in *Dryden's Virg.* P.

† *Dedication to Virg. Ecl.* P.

the time of Theocritus; it was used in part of Greece, and frequent in the mouths of many of the greatest persons: whereas the old English and country phrases of Spenser were either entirely obsolete, or spoken only by people of the lowest condition. As there is a difference betwixt simplicity and rusticity, so the expression of simple thoughts should be plain, but not clownish. The addition he has made of a Calendar to his Eclogues is very beautiful; since by this, besides the general moral of innocence and simplicity, which is common to other authors of Pastoral, he has one peculiar to himself; he compares human life to the several seasons, and at once exposes to his readers a view of the great and little worlds, in their various changes and aspects. Yet the scrupulous division of his Pastorals into months, has obliged him either to repeat the same description in other words, for three months together; or, when it was exhausted before, entirely to omit it: whence it comes to pass that some of his Eclogues (as the sixth, eighth, and tenth, for example) have nothing but their titles to distinguish them. The reason is evident, because the year has not that variety in it to furnish every month with a particular description, as it may every season.

Of the following Eclogues, I shall only say, that these four comprehend all the subjects which the critics upon Theocritus and Virgil will allow to be fit for Pastorals; that they have as much variety of description, in respect of the several seasons, as Spenser's: that, in order to add to this variety, the several times of the day are observed, the rural employments in each season or time of day, and the rural scenes or places proper to such employments; not without some regard to the several ages of man, and the different passions proper to each age.

But, after all, if they have any merit, it is to be attributed to some good old authors, whose works, as I had leisure to study, so, I hope I have not wanted care to imitate.

PASTORALS.

I.

SPRING; OR, DAMON.

TO SIR WILLIAM TRUMBALL.

FIRST in these fields I try the sylvan strains,
Nor blush to sport on Windsor's blissful plains:
Fair Thames! flow gently from thy sacred spring,
While on thy banks Sicilian muses sing;
Let vernal airs through trembling osiers play, 5
And Albion's cliffs resound the rural lay.

You that, too wise for pride, too good for pow'r,
Enjoy the glory to be great no more,
And carrying with you all the world can boast,
To all the world illustriously are lost! 10
O let my Muse her slender reed inspire,
Till in your native shades you tune the lyre:
So when the nightingale to rest removes,
The thrush may chant to the forsaken groves.
But charm'd to silence, listens while she sings, 15
And all the aërial audience clap their wings.

Soon as the flocks shook off the nightly dew,
Two swains, whom love kept wakeful, and the muse,
Pour'd o'er the whitening vale their fleecy care,
Fresh as the morn, and as the season fair; 20
The dawn now blushing on the mountain's side,
Thus Daphnis spoke, and Strephon thus reply'd.

Daphnis. Hear how the birds on every blooming
With joyous music wake the dawning day! [spray,
Why sit we mute, when early linnets sing, 25
When warbling Philomel salutes the spring?
Why sit we sad, when Phosphor shines so clear,
And lavish Nature paints the purple year? [strain,

Strephon. Sing then, and Damon shall attend the
While yon slow oxen turn the furrow'd plain. 30
Here the bright crocus and blue violet glow;
Here western winds on breathing roses blow.

I'll stake yon lamb, that near the fountain plays,
And from the brink his dancing shade surveys.

Daph. And I this bowl, where wanton ivy twines,
And swelling clusters bend the curling vines: 36

Four figures rising from the work appear,
The various seasons of the rolling year;
And what is that, which binds the radiant sky,
Where twelve fair signs, in beauteous order lie? 40

Damon. Then sing by turns, by turns the Muses sing,
Now hawthorns blossom, now the daisies spring;
Now leaves the trees, and flow'rs adorn the ground;
Begin, the vales shall ev'ry note rebound.

Streph. Inspire me, Phœbus! in my Delia's praise,
With Waller's strains, or Granville's moving lays: 46
A milk-white bull shall at your altars stand,
That threats a fight, and spurns the rising sand.

Daph. O Love! for Sylvia let me gain the prize,
And make my tongue victorious as her eyes: 50
No lambs or sheep for victims I'll impart;
Thy victim, Love, shall be the shepherd's heart.

Streph. Me gentle Delia beckons from the plain,
Then, hid in shades, eludes her eager swain;
But feigns a laugh, to see me search around, 55
And by that laugh the willing fair is found.

Daph. The sprightly Sylvia trips along the green;
She runs, but hopes she does not run unseen;
While a kind glance at her pursuer flies,
How much at variance are her feet and eyes! 60

Streph. O'er golden sands let rich Pactolus flow,
And trees weep amber on the banks of Po;
Blest Thames's shores the brightest beauties yield:
Feed here my lambs, I'll seek no distant field.

Daph. Celestial Venus haunts Idalia's groves; 65
Diana Cynthus, Ceres Hybla loves.

If Windsor shades delight the matchless maid,
Cynthus and Hybla yield to Windsor shade. [show'rs.

Streph. All nature mourns, the skies relent in
Hush'd are the birds, and clos'd the drooping flow'rs;
If Delia smile the flow'rs begin to spring, 71
The skies to brighten, and the birds to sing.

Daph. All Nature laughs, the groves are fresh and fair.

The sun's mild lustre warms the vital air;
If Sylvia smiles, new glories gild the shore, 75
And vanquish'd Nature seems to charm no more.

Streph. In spring the fields, in autumn hills I love,
At morn the plains, at noon the shady grove;
But Delia always; absent from her sight,
Nor plains at morn, nor groves at noon delight. 80

Daph. Sylvia's like autumn ripe, yet mild as May,
More bright than noon, yet fresh as early day:
Ev'n spring displeases, when she shines not here;
But bless'd with her, 'tis spring throughout the year.

Streph. Say, Daphnis, say, in what glad soil appears,
A wond'rous tree, that sacred Monarchs bears*? 86
Tell me but this, and I'll disclaim the prize,
And give the conquest to thy Sylvia's eyes.

Daph. Nay, tell me first, in what more happy fields
The thistle springs, to which the lily yields;† 90
And then a nobler prize I will resign:
For Sylvia, charming Sylvia, shall be thine.

Dam. Cease to contend; for Daphnis, I decree
The bowl to Strephon, and the lamb to thee.
Blest swains, whose nymphs in ev'ry grace excel; 95
Blest nymphs, whose swains those graces sing so well!
Now rise, and haste to yonder woodbine bow'rs,
A soft retreat from sudden vernal show'rs;
The turf with rural dainties shall be crown'd,
While op'ning blooms diffuse their sweets around.
For see! the gath'ring flocks to shelter tend, 101
And from the Pleiads fruitful show'rs descend.

* An allusion to the royal oak, in which Charles II. had been hid from the pursuit after the battle of Worcester.

† Alludes to the device of the Scots monarchs, the thistle, worn by Queen Anne; and to the arms of France, the fleur de lys. The two riddles are in imitation of those in Virg. Ecl. 3d.

II.

SUMMER; OR, ALEXIS.

TO DR. GARTH.

A SHEPHERD'S boy (he seeks no better name)
 Led forth his flocks along the silver Thame,
 Where dancing sun-beams on the waters play'd,
 And verdant alders form'd a quiv'ring shade.
 Soft as he mourn'd, the streams forgot to flow, 5
 The flocks around a dumb compassion show,
 The Naiads wept in ev'ry wat'ry bow'r,
 And Jove consented in a silent show'r.

Accept, O Garth, the Muses' early lays,
 That adds this wreath of ivy to thy bays; 10
 Hear what from love unpractis'd hearts endure.
 From love, the sole disease thou canst not cure.

Ye shady beeches, and ye cooling streams,
 Defence from Phœbus', not from Cupid's beams,
 To you I mourn; nor to the deaf I sing, 15
 The woods shall answer, and their echo ring.
 The hills and rocks attend my doleful lay;
 Why art thou prouder and more hard than they?
 The bleating sheep with my complaints agree,
 They parch'd with heat, and I inflam'd by thee. 20
 The sultry Sirius burns the thirsty plains,
 While in thy heart eternal winter reigns.

Where stray ye, Muses? in what lawn or grove,
 While your Alexis pines in hopeless love?
 In those fair fields where sacred Isis glides, 25
 Or else where Cam his winding vales divides?
 As in the crystal spring I view my face,
 Fresh rising blushes paint the wat'ry glass;
 But since those graces please thy eyes no more.
 I shun the fountains which I sought before. 30
 Once I was skill'd in ev'ry herb that grew,
 And ev'ry plant that drinks the morning dew;
 Ah! wretched shepherd, what avails thy art,
 To cure thy lambs, but not to heal thy heart!

Let other swains attend the rural care, 35
 Feed fairer flocks, or richer fleeces shear;

But nigh yon mountain let me tune my lays,
Embrace my love, and bind my brows with bays.
That flute is mine, which Colin's tuneful breath
Inspir'd when living, and bequeath'd in death. 40
He said, "Alexis, take this pipe, the same
That taught the groves my Rosalinda's name."
But now the reeds shall hang on yonder tree,
For ever silent, since despis'd by thee.
Oh! were I made by some transforming pow'r, 45
The captive bird that sings within thy bow'r!
Then might my voice thy list'ning ears employ,
And I those kisses he receives enjoy.

And yet my numbers please the rural throng;
Rough satyrs dance, and Pan applauds the song:
The nymphs, forsaking ev'ry cave and spring, 51
Their early fruit, and milk-white turtles bring;
Each am'rous nymph prefers her gifts in vain,
On you their gifts are all bestow'd again.
For you the swains the fairest flow'rs design, 55
And in one garland all their beauties join:
Accept the wreath which you deserve alone,
In whom all beauties are compriz'd in one.

See what delights in sylvan scenes appear!
Descending gods have found Elysium here. 60
In woods bright Venus with Adonis stray'd,
And chaste Diana haunts the forest-shade.
Come, lovely nymph, and bless the silent hours,
When swains from shearing seek their nightly bow'rs;
When weary reapers quit the sultry field, 65
And, crown'd with corn, their thanks to Ceres yield.
This harmless grove no lurking viper hides,
But in my breast the serpent Love abides.
Here bees from blossoms sip the rosy dew;
But your Alexis knows no sweets but you. 70
Oh, deign to visit our forsaken seats,
The mossy fountains, and the green retreats!
Where'er you walk, cool gales shall fan the glade,
Trees, where you sit, shall croud into a shade:
Where'er you tread, the blushing flow'rs shall rise,
And all things flourish where you turn your eyes.

Oh! how I long with you to pass my days,
 Invoke the Muses, and resound your praise;
 Your praise the birds shall chant in ev'ry grove,
 And winds shall waft it to the pow'rs above. 80
 But would you sing, and rival Orpheus' strain,
 The wond'ring forests soon should dance again,
 The moving mountains hear the pow'rful call,
 And headlong streams hang list'ning in their fall!
 But see, the shepherds shun the noon-day heat, 85
 The lowing herds to murm'ring brooks retreat,
 To closer shades the panting flocks remove;
 Ye Gods! and is there no relief for love?
 But soon the sun with milder rays descends
 To the cool ocean, where his journey ends; 90
 On me Love's fiercer flames for ever prey,
 By night he scorches, as he burns by day.

 III.

AUTUMN; OR, HYLAS AND ÆGON.

TO MR. WYCHERLEY.

BENEATH the shade a spreading beech displays,
 Hylas and Ægon sung their rural lays:
 This mourn'd a faithless, that an absent love,
 And Delia's name and Doris' fill'd the grove.
 Ye Mantuan nymphs, your sacred succour bring; 5
 Hylas and Ægon's rural lays I sing.
 Thou, whom the Nine with Plautus' wit inspire,
 The art of Terence, and Menander's fire;
 Whose sense instructs us, and whose humour charms,
 Whose judgment sways us, and whose spirit warms;
 Oh, skill'd in Nature! see the hearts of swains, 11
 Their artless passions, and their tender pains.
 Now setting Phœbus shone serenely bright,
 And fleecy clouds were streak'd with purple light;
 When tuneful Hylas, with melodious moan, 15
 Taught rocks to weep, and made the mountains
 groan.

Go, gentle Gales, and bear my sighs away!
 To Delia's ear the tender notes convey.
 As some sad turtle his lost love deplores,
 And with deep murmur fills the sounding shores;
 Thus, far from Delia, to the winds I mourn, 21
 Alike unheard, unpity'd, and forlorn.

Go, gentle Gales, and bear my sighs along!
 For her, the feather'd quires neglect their song;
 For her, the limes their pleasing shades deny; 25
 For her, the lilies hang their heads and die.
 Ye Flow'rs that droop, forsaken by the spring;
 Ye Birds that, left by summer, cease to sing;
 Ye Trees, that fade when autumn heats remove,
 Say, is not absence death to those who love? 30

Go, gentle Gales, and bear my sighs away!
 Curs'd be the fields that cause my Delia's stay:
 Fade ev'ry blossom, wither ev'ry tree,
 Die ev'ry flow'r, and perish all but she.
 What have I said? Where'er my Delia flies, 35
 Let spring attend, and sudden flow'rs arise!
 Let op'ning roses knotted oaks adorn,
 And liquid amber drop from ev'ry thorn.

Go, gentle Gales, and bear my sighs along!
 The birds shall cease to tune their ev'ning song, 40
 The winds to breathe, the waving woods to move,
 And streams to murmur, ere I cease to love.
 Not bubbling fountains to the thirsty swain,
 Not balmy sleep to lab'ers faint with pain,
 Not show'rs to larks, or sunshine to the bee, 45
 Are half so charming as thy sight to me.

Go, gentle Gales, and bear my sighs away!
 Come, Delia, come; ah, why this long delay?
 Through rocks and caves the name of Delia sounds,
 Delia, each cave and echoing rock rebounds. 50
 Ye Pow'rs, what pleasing frenzy soothes my mind!
 Do lovers dream, or is my Delia kind?
 She comes, my Delia comes!—Now cease my lay,
 And cease, ye Gales, to bear my sighs away!

Next Ægon sung, while Windsor groves admir'd:
 Rehearse, ye Muses, what yourselves inspir'd. 56

Resound, ye Hills, resound my mournful strain!
 Of perjur'd Doris, dying I complain:
 Here where the mountains, less'ning as they rise,
 Lose the low vales, and steal into the skies; 60
 While lab'ring oxen, spent with toil and heat,
 In their loose traces from the field retreat;
 While curling smokes from village-tops are seen,
 And the fleet shades glide o'er the dusky green.

Resound, ye Hills, resound my mournful lay! 65
 Bencath yon poplar oft we pass'd the day:
 Oft on the rind I carv'd her am'rous vows,
 While she with garlands hung the bending boughs:
 The garlands fade, the vows are worn away;
 So dies her love, and so my hopes decay. 70

Resound, ye Hills, resound my mournful strain!
 Now bright Arcturus glads the teeming grain;
 Now golden fruits on loaded branches shine,
 And grateful clusters swell with floods of wine;
 Now blushing berries paint the yellow grove: 75
 Just Gods! shall all things yield returns but love?

Resound, ye Hills, resound my mournful lay!
 The shepherds cry, "Thy flocks are left a prey."
 Ah! what avails it me the flocks to keep,
 Who lost my heart while I preserv'd my sheep? 80
 Pan came, and ask'd, "What magic caused my smart,
 Or what ill eyes malignant glances dart?"
 What eyes but her's, alas, have pow'r to move?
 And is there magic but what dwells in love?

Resound, ye Hills, resound my mournful strains;
 I'll fly from shepherds, flocks, and flow'ry plains; 86
 From shepherds, flocks, and plains I may remove,
 Forsake mankind, and all the world--but Love!
 I know thee, Love! on foreign mountains bred,
 Wolves gave thee suck, and savage tygers fed; 90
 Thou wert from Etna's burning entrails torn,
 Got by fierce whirlwinds, and in thunder born!

Resound, ye Hills, resound my mournful lay!
 Farewell, ye Woods! adieu the light of day!
 One leap from yonder cliff shall end my pains: 95
 No more, ye Hills, no more resound my strains;

Thus sung the shepherds till th' approach of night,
 The skies yet blushing with departing light,
 When falling dews with spangles deck'd the glade,
 And the low sun had lengthen'd ev'ry shade. 100

IV.

WINTER; OR, DAPHNE.

TO THE MEMORY OF MRS. TEMPEST.

Lycidas.

THYRSIS! the music of that murm'ring spring
 Is not so mournful as the strains you sing;
 Nor rivers winding through the vales below,
 So sweetly warble, or so smoothly flow.

Now sleeping flocks on their soft fleeces lie, 5
 The moon, serene in glory, mounts the sky,
 Whilst silent birds forget their tuneful lays,
 Oh, sing of Daphne's face, and Daphne's praise!

Thyr. Behold the groves that shine with silver frost,
 Their beauty wither'd, and their verdure lost.

Here shall I try the sweet Alexis' strain, 11
 That call'd the list'ning Dryads to the plain?
 Thames heard the numbers, as he flow'd along,
 And bade his willows learn the moving song.

Lyc. So may kind rains their vital moisture yield,
 And swell the future harvest of the field. 16

Begin; this charge the dying Daphne gave,
 And said, "Ye shepherds, sing around my grave;"
 Sing, while beside the shaded tomb I mourn,
 And with fresh bays her rural shrine adorn. 20

Thyr. Ye gentle Muses, leave your crystal spring;
 Let nymphs and sylvans cypress-garlands bring;
 Ye weeping Loves, the stream with myrtles hide,
 And break your bows, as when Adonis died;
 And with your golden darts, now useless grown, 25
 Inscribe a verse on this relenting stone:

"Let nature change, let heaven and earth deplore;
 "Fair Daphne's dead, and love is now no more!"

'Tis done; and Nature's various charms decay;
See gloomy clouds obscure the cheerful day! 30
Now hung with pearls the dropping trees appear,
Their faded honours scatter'd on her bier.

See, where on earth the flow'ry glories lie;
With her they flourish'd, and with her they die.
Ah! what avail the beauties Nature wore? 35
Fair Daphne's dead, and beauty is no more!

For her the flocks refuse their verdant food,
The thirsty heifers shun the gliding flood,
The silver swans her hapless fate bemoan,
In notes more sad than when they sing their own; 40
In hollow caves sweet Echo silent lies,
Silent, or only to her name replies;

Her name with pleasure once she taught the shore;
Now Daphne's dead, and pleasure is no more!

No grateful dews descend from ev'ning skies, 45
Nor morning odours from the flow'rs arise;
No rich perfumes refresh the fruitful field,
Nor fragrant herbs their native incense yield.
The balmy zephyrs, silent since her death,
Lament the ceasing of a sweeter breath; 50

Th' industrious bees neglect their golden store:
Fair Daphne's dead, and sweetness is no more!

No more the mounting larks, while Daphne sings,
Shall, list'ning in mid air, suspend their wings;
No more the birds shall imitate her lays, 55
Or, hush'd with wonder, hearken from the sprays;
No more the streams their murmurs shall forbear,
A sweeter music than their own to hear:

But tell the reeds, and tell the vocal shore,
Fair Daphne's dead, and music is no more! 60

Her fate is whisper'd by the gentle breeze,
And told in sighs to all the trembling trees;
The trembling trees, in ev'ry plain and wood,
Her fate remurmur to the silver flood;
The silver flood, so lately calm, appears 65
Swell'd with new passion, and o'erflows with tears;
The winds, and trees, and floods, her death deplore,
Daphne, our grief, our glory, now no more!

But see! where Daphne wond'ring mounts on high,
Above the clouds, above the starry sky! 70

Eternal beauties grace the shining scenes,
Fields ever fresh, and groves for ever green;
There while you rest in amaranthine bow'rs,
Or from those meads select unfading flow'rs,
Behold us kindly, who your name implore, 75
Daphne, our goddess, and our grief, no more!

Lyc. How all things listen, while thy muse com-
Such silence waits on Philomela's strains, [plains!
In some still ev'ning, when the whisp'ring breeze
Pants on the leaves, and dies upon the trees. 80

To thee, bright Goddess, oft a lamb shall bleed,
If teeming ewes increase my fleecy breed.
While plants their shade, or flow'rs their odours give,
Thy name, thy honour, and thy praise shall live!

Thyr. But see, Orion sheds unwholesome dew's;
Arise, the pines a noxious shade diffuse; 86
Sharp Boreas blows, and Nature feels decay;
Time conquers all, and we must Time obey.
Adieu, ye Vales, ye Mountains, Streams, and Groves;
Adieu, ye Shepherds' rural Lays and Loves; 90
Adieu, my Flocks; farewell, ye Sylvan Crew;
Daphne, farewell; and all the World adieu!

WINDSOR FOREST.

TO THE

RT. HON. GEORGE LORD LANSDOWN.

Non injussa cano: te nostræ, Vare, myricæ,
Te nemus omne canet: nec Phœbo gratior ulla est,
Quam sibi quæ Vari prescripsit pagina nomen.

Virg.

THY forest, Windsor! and thy green retreats,
At once the Monarch's and the Muses' seats,
Invite my lays. Be present, sylvan Maids!
Unlock your springs, and open all your shades.
Granville commands; your aid, O Muses, bring! 5
What muse for Granville can refuse to sing?

The groves of Eden, vanish'd now so long,
 Live in description, and look green in song:
 These, were my breast inspir'd with equal flame,
 Like them in beauty, should be like in fame. 10
 Here hills and vales, the woodland and the plain,
 Here earth and water seem to strive again;
 Not chaos-like, together crush'd and bruis'd,
 But, as the world, harmoniously confus'd;
 Where order in variety we see, 15
 And where, though all things differ, all agree.
 Here waving groves a chequer'd scene display,
 And part admit, and part exclude the day;
 As some coy nymph her lover's warm address,
 Nor quite indulges, nor can quite repress. 20
 There interspers'd in lawns and op'ning glades,
 Thin trees arise, that shun each other's shades.
 Here in full light the russet plains extend;
 There wrapt in clouds, the bluish hills ascend.
 E'en the wild heath displays her purple dyes, 25
 And 'midst the desert fruitful fields arise,
 That, crown'd with tufted trees and springing corn,
 Like verdant isles, the sable waste adorn.
 Let India boast her plants, nor envy we
 The weeping amber of the balmy tree, 30
 While by our oaks the precious loads are borne,
 And realms commanded which those trees adorn.
 Not proud Olympus yields a nobler sight,
 Though Gods assembled grace his tow'ring height,
 Than what more humble mountains offer here, 35
 Where, in their blessings, all those Gods appear.
 See Pan with flocks, with fruits Pomona crown'd;
 Here blushing Flora paints th' enamell'd ground;
 Here Ceres' gifts in waving prospect stand,
 And nodding tempt the joyful reaper's hand; 40
 Rich industry sits smiling on the plains,
 And peace and plenty tell, a Stuart reigns.
 Not thus the land appear'd in ages past,
 A dreary desert and a gloomy waste,
 To savage beasts and savage laws a prey, 45
 And kings more furious and severe than they;

Who claim'd the skies, dispeopled air and floods;
The lonely lords of empty wilds and woods:
Cities laid waste, they storm'd the dens and caves,
(For wiser brutes were backward to be slaves.) 50
What could be free, when lawless beasts obey'd,
And e'en the elements a tyrant sway'd?
In vain kind seasons swell'd the teeming grain,
Soft show'rs distill'd, and suns grew warm in vain:
The swain with tears his frustrate labour yields, 55
And famish'd dies amidst his ripen'd fields.
What wonder then, a beast or subject slain
Were equal crimes in a despotic reign?
Both doom'd alike, for sportive tyrants bled;
But while the subject starv'd, the beast was fed. 60
Proud Nimrod first the bloody chace began,
A mighty hunter, and his prey was man:
Our haughty Norman boasts that barb'rous name,
And makes his trembling slaves the royal game.
The fields are ravish'd from th' industrious swains, 65
From men their cities, and from gods their fanes:
The levell'd towns with weeds lie cover'd o'er;
The hollow winds thro' naked temples roar;
Round broken columns clasping ivy twin'd;
O'er heaps of ruin stalk'd the stately hind; 70
The fox obscene to gaping tombs retires,
And savage howlings fill the sacred quires.
Aw'd by his nobles, by his commons curst,
Th' oppressor rul'd tyrannic where he durst,
Stretch'd o'er the poor and church his iron-rod, 75
And serv'd alike his vassals and his God.
Whom e'en the Saxon spar'd, and bloody Dane,
The wanton victims of his sport remain.
But see the man, who spacious regions gave
A waste for beasts, himself deny'd a grave! 80
Stretch'd on the lawn his second hope survey,
At once the chaser, and at once the prey:
Lo Rufus, tugging at the deadly dart,
Bleeds in the forest like a wounded hart.
Succeeding monarchs heard the subjects' cries, 85
Nor saw displeas'd the peaceful cottage rise:

Then gath'ring flocks on unknown mountains fed,
 O'er sandy wilds were yellow harvests spread:
 The forest wondered at th' unusual grain,
 And secret transports touch'd the conscious swain.
 Fair Liberty, Britannia's goddess, rears 91
 Her cheerful head, and leads the golden years.

Ye vig'rous swains! while youth ferments your
 And purer spirits swell the sprightly flood, [blood,
 Now range the hills, the gameful woods beset, 95
 Wind the shrill horn, or spread the waving net,
 When milder autumn summer's heat succeeds,
 And in the new-shorn field the partridge feeds,
 Before his lord the ready spaniel bounds,
 Panting with hope, he tries the furrow'd grounds;
 But when the tainted gales the game betray, 101
 Couch'd close he lies, and meditates the prey;
 Secure they trust th' unfaithful field beset,
 Till hov'ring o'er 'em sweeps the swelling net.

Thus (if small things we may with great compare)
 When Albion sends her eager sons to war, 106
 Some thoughtless town, with ease and plenty blest,
 Near, and more near, the closing lines invest;
 Sudden they seize th' amaz'd, defenceless prize,
 And in high air Britannia's standard flies. 110

See! from the brake the whirring pheasant springs,
 And mounts exulting on triumphant wings:
 Short is his joy; he feels the fiery wound,
 Flutters in blood, and panting beats the ground.
 Ah! what avails his glossy, varying dyes, 115
 His purple crest, and scarlet-circled eyes,
 The vivid green his shining plumes unfold,
 His painted wings, and breast that flames with gold?

Nor yet, when moist Arcturus clouds the sky,
 The woods and fields their pleasing toils deny. 120
 To plains with well-breath'd beagles we repair,
 And trace the mazes of the circling hare:
 (Beasts, urg'd by us, their fellow-beasts pursue,
 And learn of man each other to undo.)
 With slaught'ring guns th' unwearied fowler roves,
 When frosts have whiten'd all the naked groves, 126

Where doves in flocks the leafless trees o'ershade,
And lonely woodcocks haunt the wat'ry glade.
He lifts the tube, and levels with his eye;
Straight a short thunder breaks the frozen sky: 130
Oft, as in airy rings they skim the heath,
The clam'rous lapwings feel the leaden death:
Oft, as the mounting larks their notes prepare,
They fall, and leave their little lives in air.

In genial spring, beneath the quiv'ring shade, 135
Where cooling vapours breathe along the mead,
The patient fisher takes his silent stand
Intent, his angle trembling in his hand,
With looks unmov'd, he hopes the scaly breed,
And eyes the dancing cork and bending reed. 140
Our plenteous streams a various race supply;
The bright-ey'd perch, with fins of Tyrian dye;
The silver eel, in shining volumes roll'd;
The yellow carp, in scales bedropp'd with gold;
Swift trouts, diversified with crimson stains; 145
And pikes, the tyrants of the wat'ry plains.

Now Cancer glows with Phœbus' fiery car,
The youth rush eager to the sylvan war,
Swarm o'er the lawns, the forest walks surround,
Rouse the fleet hart, and cheer the op'ning hound.
Th' impatient courser pants in ev'ry vein, 151
And pawing, seems to beat the distant plain:
Hills, vales, and floods appear already cross'd,
And ere he starts, a thousand steps are lost.
See the bold youth strain up the threat'ning steep,
Rush through the thickets, down the vallies sweep,
Hang o'er their coursers' heads with eager speed,
And earth rolls back beneath the flying steed.
Let old Arcadia boast her ample plain,
Th' immortal huntress, and her virgin train: 160
Nor envy, Windsor! since thy shades have seen
As bright a goddess, and as chaste a queen;
Whose care, like her's, protects the sylvan reign,
The earth's fair light, and empress of the main.
Here too, 'tis sung, of old, Diana stray'd, 165
And Cynthus top forsook for Windsor shade;

Here was she seen o'er airy wastes to rove,
Seek the clear spring, or haunt the pathless grove;
Here arm'd with silver bows, in early dawn,
Her buskin'd virgins trac'd the dewy lawn. 170

Above the rest a rural nymph was fam'd,
Thy offspring, Thames! the fair Lodona nam'd;
(Lodona's fate, in long oblivion cast,
The muse shall sing, and what she sings shall last.)
Scarce could the goddess from her nymph be known,
But by the crescent and the golden zone. 176
She scorn'd the praise of beauty and the care;
A belt her waist, a fillet binds her hair;
A painted quiver on her shoulder sounds,
And with her dart the flying deer she wounds. 180
It chanc'd, as eager of the chace, the maid
Beyond the Forest's verdant limits stray'd,
Pan saw and lov'd, and, burning with desire,
Pursu'd her flight; her flight increas'd his fire.
Not half so swift the trembling doves can fly, 185
When the fierce eagle cleaves the liquid sky;
Not half so swiftly the fierce eagle moves,
When thro' the clouds he drives the trembling doves:
As from the god she flew with furious pace,
Or as the god, more furious, urged the chace. 190
Now fainting, sinking, pale, the nymph appears;
Now close behind, his sounding steps she hears;
And now his shadow reach'd her as she run,
His shadow lengthen'd by the setting sun;
And now his shorter breath, with sultry air, 195
Pants on her neck, and fans her parting hair.
In vain on father Thames she calls for aid,
Nor could Diana help her injur'd maid.
Faint, breathless, thus she pray'd, nor pray'd in vain;
"Ah, Cynthia! ah---tho' banish'd from thy train,
"Let me, O let me, to the shades repair, 201
"My native shades---there weep, and murmur there."
She said, and melting as in tears she lay,
In a soft silver stream dissolv'd away.
The silver stream her virgin coldness keeps, 205
For ever murmurs, and for ever weeps:

Still bears the name the hapless virgin bore,
And bathes the forest where she rang'd before.
In her chaste current oft the goddess laves,
And with celestial tears augments the waves. 210

Oft in her glass the musing shepherd spies
The headlong mountains and the downward skies;
The wat'ry landscape of the pendant woods,
And absent trees that tremble in the floods;
In the clear azure gleam the flocks are seen, 215

And floating forests paint the waves with green.
Thro' the fair scene roll slow the ling'ring streams,
Then foaming pour along, and rush into the Thames.

Thou, too, great father of the British floods!
With joyful pride survey'st our lofty woods; 220
Where tow'ring oaks their growing honours rear,
And future navies on thy shores appear.

Not Neptune's self from all his streams receives
A wealthier tribute than to thine he gives.
No seas so rich, so gay no banks appear, 225
No lake so gentle, and no spring so clear.
Nor Po so swells the fabling poets' lays,

While led along the skies his current strays,
As thine, which visits Windsor's fam'd abodes,
To grace the mansion of our earthly gods; 230
Nor all ye stars above a lustre show
Like the bright beauties on thy banks below;
Where Jove, subdu'd by mortal passions still,
Might change Olympus for a nobler hill.

Happy the man whom this bright court approves,
His sov'reign favours, and his country loves: 236
Happy next him, who to these shades retires,
Whom nature charms, and whom the Muse inspires:
Whom humbler joys of home-felt quiet please,
Successive study, exercise, and ease. 240

He gathers health from herbs the forest yields,
And of their fragrant physic spoils the fields:
With chemic art exalts the min'ral pow'rs,
And draws the aromatic souls of flowers:
Now marks the course of rolling orbs on high; 245
O'er figur'd worlds now travels with his eye;

Of ancient writ unlocks the learned store,
 Consults the dead, and lives past ages o'er:
 Or wand'ring thoughtful in the silent wood,
 Attends the duties of the wise and good, 250
 T'observe a mean, be to himself a friend,
 To follow Nature, and regard his end;
 Or looks on Heav'n with more than mortal eyes,
 Bids his free soul expatiate in the skies,
 Amid her kindred stars familiar roam, 255
 Survey the region, and confess her home!
 Such was the life great Scipio once admired.
 Thus Atticus, and Trumbull thus retir'd

Ye sacred Nine! that all my soul possess,
 Whose raptures fire me, and whose visions bless, 260
 Bear me, O bear me, to sequester'd scenes,
 The bow'ry mazes, and surrounding greens;
 To Thames's banks, which fragrant breezes fill,
 Or where ye Muses sport on Cooper's Hill.
 (On Cooper's Hill eternal wreaths shall grow, 265
 While lasts the mountain, or while Thames shall flow.)
 I seem through consecrated walks to rove,
 I hear soft music die along the grove:
 Led by the sound, I roam from shade to shade,
 By godlike poets venerable made: 270
 Here his first lays majestic Denham sung;
 There the last numbers flow'd from Cowley's tongue.
 O early lost! what tears the river shed,
 When the sad pomp along his banks was led!
 His drooping swans on ev'ry note expire, 275
 And on his willows hung each Muse's lyre.

Since Fate relentless stopp'd their heav'nly voice,
 No more the forests ring, or groves rejoice;
 Who now shall charm the shades where Cowley
 His living harp, and lofty Denham sung? [strung
 But hark! the groves rejoice, the Forest rings! 281
 Are these reviv'd? or is it Granville sings?
 'Tis yours, my Lord, to bless our soft retreats,
 And call the Muses to their ancient seats;
 To paint anew the flow'ry sylvan scenes, 285
 To crown the forests with immortal greens;

Make Windsor-hills in lofty numbers rise,
 And lift her turrets nearer to the skies;
 To sing those honours you deserve to wear,
 And add new lustre to her silver star. 290

Here noble Surrey felt the sacred rage,
 Surrey, the Granville of a former age:
 Matchless his pen, victorious was his lance,
 Bold in the lists, and graceful in the dance:
 In the same shades the Cupids tun'd his lyre, 295
 To the same notes, of love, and soft desire:
 Fair Geraldine, bright object of his vow,
 Then fill'd the groves, as heav'nly Mira now.

O wouldst thou sing what heroes Windsor bore,
 What kings first breath'd upon her winding shore,
 Or raise old warriors, whose ador'd remains 301
 In weeping vaults her hallow'd earth contains!
 With Edward's acts adorn the shining page,
 Stretch his long triumphs down through ev'ry age,
 Draw monarchs chain'd, and Cressi's glorious field,
 The lilies blazing on the regal shield: 306
 Then, from her roofs when Verrio's colours fall,
 And leave inanimate the naked wall,
 Still in thy song should vanquish'd France appear,
 And bleed for ever under Britain's spear. 310

Let softer strains ill-fated Henry mourn,
 And palms eternal flourish round his urn.
 Here o'er the martyr-king the marble weeps,
 And, fast beside him, once fear'd Edward sleeps;
 Whom not th' extended Albion could contain, 315
 From old Belerium* to the northern main.

The grave unites; where e'en the great find rest,
 And blended lie th' oppressor and th' opprest?

Make sacred Charles's tomb for ever known,
 (Obscure the place, and uninscrib'd the stone.) 320
 O fact accurs'd! what tears has Albion shed!
 Heav'ns! what new wounds! and how her old have
 bled.

* From Belerus, a Cornish giant; that part of Cornwall called the Land's End.

She saw her sons with purple deaths expire,
 Her sacred domes involv'd in rolling fire,
 A dreadful series of intestine wars, 325
 Inglorious triumphs, and dishonest scars.

At length great Anna said, "Let discord cease!"
 She said; the world obey'd, and all was peace!

In that blest moment, from his oozy bed
 Old father Thames advanc'd his reverend head; 330
 His tresses dropp'd with dew, and o'er the stream
 His shining horns diffus'd a golden gleam:
 Grav'd on his urn appear'd the moon, that guides
 His swelling waters, and alternate tide;
 The figur'd streams in waves of silver roll'd, 335
 And on her banks Augusta rose in gold.

Around his throne the sea-born brothers stood,
 Who swell with tributary urns his flood.
 First the fam'd authors of his ancient name,
 The winding Isis and the fruitful Thame: 340
 The Kennet swift, for silver eels renown'd;
 The Loddon slow, with verdant alders crown'd;
 Cole, whose dark streams his flow'ry islands lave;
 And chalky Wey, that rolls a milky wave:
 The blue, transparent Vandalis appears; 345
 The gulphy Lee his sedgy tresses rears;
 And sullen Mole, that hides his diving flood;
 And silent Darent, stain'd with Danish blood.

High in the midst, upon his urn reclin'd,
 (His sea-green mantle waving with the wind,) 350
 The god appear'd: he turn'd his azure eyes
 Where Windsor domes and pompous turrets rise;
 Then bow'd and spoke; the winds forget to roar,
 And the hush'd waves glide softly to the shore:--
 "Hail, sacred peace! hail, long expected days, 355
 That Thames's glory to the stars shall raise!
 Though Tyber's streams immortal Rome behold,
 Though foaming Hermus swells with tides of gold,
 From heav'n itself though seven-fold Nilus flows,
 And harvests on a hundred realms bestows; 360
 These now no more shall be the Muse's themes,
 Lost in my fame, as in the sea their streams.

Let Volga's banks with iron squadrons shine,
 And groves of lances glitter on the Rhine;
 Let barbarous Ganges arm a servile train; 365
 Be mine the blessings of a peaceful reign.
 No more my sons shall dye with British blood
 Red Iber's sands, or Ister's foaming flood:
 Safe on my shore each unmolested swain
 Shall tend the flocks, or reap the bearded grain; 370
 The shady empire shall retain no trace
 Of war or blood, but in the sylvan chace;
 The trumpet sleep, while cheerful horns are blown,
 And arms employ'd on birds and beasts alone.
 Behold! th' ascending villas on my side, 375
 Project long shadows o'er the crystal tide;
 Behold! Augusta's glitt'ring spires increase,
 And temples rise, the beauteous works of Peace.
 I see, I see, where two fair cities bend
 Their ample bow, a new Whitehall ascend! 380
 There mighty nations shall inquire their doom,
 The world's great oracle in times to come;
 There kings shall sue, and suppliant states be seen
 Once more to bend before a British Queen.

"Thy trees, fair Windsor! now shall leave their
 woods, 385

And half thy forests rush into the floods,
 Bear Britain's thunder, and her cross display
 To the bright regions of the rising day;
 Tempt icy seas, where scarce the waters roll,
 Where clearer flames glow round the frozen pole;
 Or under southern skies exalt their sails, 391
 Led by new stars, and borne by spicy gales!
 For me the balm shall bleed, and amber flow,
 The coral redden, and the ruby glow,
 The pearly shell its lucid globe infold, 395
 And Phœbus warm the rip'ning ore to gold.
 The time shall come, when, free as seas or wind,
 Unbounded Thames shall flow for all mankind,
 Whole nations enter with each swelling tide,
 And seas but join the regions they divide; 400

Earth's distant ends our glory shall behold,
 And the new world launch forth to seek the old.
 Then ships of uncouth form shall stem the tide,
 And feather'd people crowd my wealthy side;
 And naked youths and painted chiefs admire 405
 Our speech, our colour, and our strange attire!
 Oh, stretch thy reign, fair Peace! from shore to
 shore,

Till conquest cease, and slav'ry be no more;
 Till the freed Indians in their native groves
 Reap their own fruits, and woo their sable loves; 410
 Peru once more a race of kings behold,
 And other Mexicos be roof'd with gold.
 Exil'd by thee, from earth to deepest hell,
 In brazen bonds, shall barb'rous Discord dwell:
 Gigantic Pride, pale Terror, gloomy Care, 415
 And mad Ambition, shall attend her there:
 There purple Vengeance, bath'd in gore, retires,
 Her weapons blunted, and extinct her fires:
 There hated Envy her own snakes shall feel,
 And Persecution mourn her broken wheel: 420
 There Faction roar, Rebellion bite her chain,
 And gasping Furies thirst for blood in vain."

Here cease thy flight, nor with unhallow'd lays,
 Touch the fair fame of Albion's golden days:
 The thoughts of Gods let Granville's verse recite,
 And bring the scenes of op'ning fate to light. 426
 My humble muse, in unambitious strains,
 Paints the green forests and the flow'ry plains,
 Where Peace descending bids her olives spring,
 And scatters blessings from her dove-like wing. 430
 Ev'n I more sweetly pass my careless days,
 Pleas'd in the silent shade with empty praise;
 Enough for me, that to the listening swains
 First in these fields I sung the sylvan strains.

MESSIAH.

A SACRED ECLOGUE.

IN IMITATION OF VIRGIL'S POLLIO.

ADVERTISEMENT.

In reading several passages of the Prophet Isaiah, which foretell the coming of Christ, and the felicities attending it, I could not but observe a remarkable parity between many of the thoughts and those in the Pollio of Virgil. This will not seem surprising, when we reflect, that the Eclogue was taken from a Sibylline prophecy on the same subject. One may judge that Virgil did not copy it line by line, but selected such ideas as best agreed with the nature of pastoral poetry, and disposed them in that manner which served most to beautify his piece. I have endeavoured the same in this Imitation of him, though without admitting any thing of my own; since it was written with this particular view, that the reader, by comparing the several thoughts, might see how far the images and descriptions of the Prophet are superior to those of the Poet. But as I fear I have prejudiced them by my management, I shall subjoin the passages of Isaiah, and those of Virgil, under the same disadvantage of a literal translation. P.

YE Nymphs of Solyma! begin the song:
To heav'nly themes sublimer strains belong.
The mossy fountains, and the sylvan shades,
The dreams of Pindus, and th' Aonian maids,
Delight no more---O thou my voice inspire 5
Who touch'd Isaiah's hallow'd lips with fire!
Rapt into future times, the bard begun:
A Virgin shall conceive, a Virgin bear a Son!
From Jesse's * root behold a branch arise,
Whose sacred flow'r with fragrance fills the skies: 10

IMITATIONS.

Ver. 8. *A Virgin shall conceive---All crimes shall cease, &c.]*
Virg. Ecl. iv. ver. 6.

Jam redit et Virgo, redeunt Saturnia regna;
Jam nova progenies cœlo demittitur alto.
Te duce, si qua manent sceleris vestigia nostri,
Irrita perpetua solvent formidine terras-----
Pacatumque reget patriis virtutibus orbem.

“ Now the Virgin returns, now the kingdom of Saturn returns,
“ now a new progeny is sent down from high heaven. By means
“ of thee, whatever relics of our crimes remain shall be wiped
“ away, and free the world from perpetual fears. He shall govern
“ the earth in peace, with the virtues of his father.”

Isaiah, ch. vii. ver. 14. “ Behold, a virgin shall conceive and
“ bear a son.” Chap. ix. ver. 6, 7. “ Unto us a child is born, unto
“ us a son is given, the Prince of Peace: of the increase of his
“ government, and of his peace, there shall be no end: upon the
“ throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order and to establish
“ it, with judgment, and with justice, for ever and ever.” P.

* Isa. xi. ver. 1.

Th' etheriál Spirit o'er its leaves shall move,
 And on its top descends the mystic dove.
 Ye Heav'ns *! from high the dewy nectar pour,
 And in soft silence shed the kindly show'r!
 The sick † and weak the healing plant shall aid, 15
 From storms a shelter, and from heat a shade.
 All crimes shall cease, and ancient fraud shall fail;
 Returning Justice ‡ lift aloft her scale;
 Peace o'er the world her olive wand extend,
 And white-rob'd Innocence from heav'n descend. 20
 Swift fly the years, and rise th' expected morn!
 Oh, spring to light, auspicious Babe! be born.
 See Nature hastes her earliest wreaths to bring,
 With all the incense of the breathing spring;
 See || lofty Lebanon his head advance, 25
 See nodding forests on the mountains dance;
 See spicy clouds from lowly Saron rise,
 And Carmel's flow'ry top perfumes the skies!
 Hark! a glad voice the lonely desert cheers;
 Prepare the way §! a God, a God appears! 30

IMITATIONS.

Ver. 23. *See Nature hastes, &c.*] Virg. Ecl. iv. 18.

At tibi prima, puer, nullo munuscula cultu,
 Errantes hederas passim cum baccare tellus.
 Mixtaque ridenti colocasia fundet acantho---
 Ipsa tibi blandos fundent cunabula flores.

“ For thee, O Child, shall the earth, without being tilled, pro-
 “ duce her early offerings; winding ivy, mixed with baccar, and
 “ colocasia with smiling acanthus. Thy cradle shall pour forth
 “ pleasing flowers about thee.”

Isaiah, ch. xxxv. ver. 1. “ The wilderness and the solitary place
 “ shall be glad, and the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the
 “ rose.” Ch. lx. ver. 13. “ The glory of Lebanon shall come
 “ unto thee, the fir-tree, the pine-tree, and the box together, to
 “ beautify the place of thy sanctuary.” P.

Ver. 29. *Hark! a glad voice, &c.*] Virg. Ecl. iv. ver. 46.

Aggredere O magnos, aderit jam tempus, honores,
 Cara deum soboles, magnum Jovis incrementum---
 Ipsi lætitia voces ad sydera jactant
 Intonsi montes, ipsæ jam carmina rupes,

Ipsa sonant arbusta, Deus, Deus ille Menalca! Ecl. v. ver. 62.
 “ Oh, come and receive the mighty honours: the time draws
 “ nigh, O beloved offspring of the gods, O great increase of Jove!
 “ The uncultivated mountains send shouts of joy to the stars, the

* Ch. xlv. ver. 8. † Ch. xxv. ver. 4. ‡ Ch. ix. ver. 7.
 || Ch. xxxv. ver. 2. § Ch. xl. ver. 3, 4.

A God, a God! the vocal hills reply;
 The rocks proclaim th' approaching deity.
 Lo, earth receives him from the bending skies!
 Sink down ye Mountains, and ye Vallies rise;
 With heads declin'd, ye Cedars, homage pay; 35
 Be smooth, ye Rocks; ye rapid Floods, give way!
 The Saviour comes! by ancient bards foretold:
 Hear him *, ye Deaf, and all ye Blind behold!
 He from thick films shall purge the visual ray,
 And on the sightless eye-ball pour the day: 40
 'Tis he th' obstructed paths of sound shall clear,
 And bid new music charm th' unfolding ear:
 The dumb shall sing, the lame his crutch forego,
 And leap exulting like the bounding roe.
 No sigh, no murmur the wide world shall hear, 45
 From ev'ry face he wipes off ev'ry tear.
 In † adamant chains shall Death be bound,
 And Hell's grim tyrant feel th' eternal wound.
 As the good shepherd ‡ tends his fleecy care,
 Seeks freshest pasture and the purest air, 50
 Explores the lost, the wand'ring sheep directs,
 By day o'ersees them, and by night protects;
 The tender lambs he raises in his arms,
 Feeds from his hand, and in his bosom warms;
 Thus shall mankind his guardian care engage, 55
 The promis'd father || of the future age.
 No more shall § nation against nation rise,
 Nor ardent warriors meet with hateful eyes,
 Nor fields with gleaming steel be cover'd o'er,
 The brazen trumpets kindle rage no more; 60

IMITATIONS.

"very rocks sing in verse, the very shrubs cry out, A God, a
 "God!"

Isaiah, ch. xl. ver. 3, 4. "The voice of him that crieth in the
 "wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord! make straight in the
 "desert a high way for our God! Every valley shall be exalted,
 "and every mountain and hill shall be made low, and the crooked
 "shall be made straight, and the rough places plain." Ch. xlv.
 ver. 23. "Break forth into singing, ye Mountains! O Forest, and
 "every tree therein! for the Lord hath redeemed Israel." P.

* Ch. xlii. ver. 18. and Ch. xxxv. ver. 5, 6. † Ch. xxv. ver. 8.
 ‡ Ch. xl. ver. 11. || Ch. ix. ver. 6. § Ch. ii. ver. 4.

But useless lances into scythes shall bend,
 And the broad falchion in a ploughshare end.
 Then palaces shall rise; the joyful * son
 Shall finish what his short-liv'd sire begun;
 Their vines a shadow to their race shall yield, 65
 And the same hand that sow'd, shall reap the field.
 The swain in barren † deserts with surprise
 Sees lilies spring, and sudden verdure rise;
 And starts amidst the thirsty wilds to hear
 New falls of water murm'ring in his ear. 70
 On rifted rocks, the dragon's late abodes,
 The green reed trembles, and the bulrush nods.
 Waste sandy vallies ‡ once perplex'd with thorn,
 The spiry fir and shapely box adorn;
 To leafless shrubs the flow'ring palms succeed, 75
 And od'rous myrtle to the noisome weed.
 The lambs|| with wolves shall graze the verdant
 And boys in flow'ry bands the tiger lead; [mead,

IMITATIONS.

Ver. 67. *The swain in barren deserts.*] Virg. Ecl. iv. ver. 28.

Molli paulatim flavescet campus arista,
 Incultisque rubens pendebit sentibus uva,
 Et duræ quercus sudabunt roscida mella.

"The fields shall grow yellow with ripened ears, and the red
 "grape shall hang upon the wild brambles, and the hard oaks shall
 "distil honey like dew."

Isaiah, ch. xxxv. ver. 7. "The parched ground shall become a
 "pool, and the thirsty lands springs of water: in the habitation
 "where dragons lay, shall be grass, and reeds, and rushes."

Ch. lv. ver. 13. "Instead of the thorn shall come up the fir-tree,
 "and instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle-tree." P.

Ver. 77. *The lambs with wolves, &c.*] Virg. Ecl. iv. ver. 21.

Ipsæ lacte domum referent distenta capellæ
 Ubera, nec magnos metuent armenta leones-----
 Occidet et serpens, et fallax herba veneni
 Occidet.----

"The goats shall bear to the fold their udders distended with
 "milk: nor shall the herds be afraid of the greatest lions. The ser-
 "pent shall die, and the herb that conceals poison shall die."

Isaiah, ch. xi. ver. 16, &c. "The wolf shall dwell with the lamb,
 "and the leopard shall lie down with the kid, and the calf, and
 "the young lion, and the fatling together; and a little child shall
 "lead them: and the lion shall eat straw like the ox: and the
 "sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned
 "child shall put his hand on the den of the cockatrice." P.

* Ch. lxxv. ver. 21, 22. † Ch. xxxv. ver. 1, 7. ‡ Ch. xli. ver. 19.
 § Ch. lv. ver. 13. || Ch. xi. ver. 6, 7, 8.

The steer and lion at one crib shall meet,
 And harmless serpents * lick the pilgrim's feet ; 80
 The smiling infant in his hand shall take
 The crested basilisk and speckled snake,
 Pleas'd, the green lustre of the scales survey.
 And with their forked tongue shall innocently play,
 Rise, crown'd with light, imperial Salem †, rise!
 Exalt thy tow'ry head, and lift thy eyes ! 86
 See a long race ‡ thy spacious courts adorn;
 See future sons and daughters, yet unborn,
 In crouding ranks on ev'ry side arise,
 Demanding life, impatient for the skies ! 90
 See barb'rous || nations at thy gates attend,
 Walk in thy light, and in thy temple bend;
 See thy bright altars throng'd with prostrate kings,
 And heap'd with products of Sabæan § springs !
 For thee Idume's spicy forests blow, 95
 And seeds of gold in Ophir's mountains glow.
 See heav'n its sparkling portals wide display,
 And break upon thee in a flood of day.
 No more the rising sun § shall gild the morn,
 Nor ev'ning Cynthia fill her silver horn ; 100
 But lost, dissolved in thy superior rays,
 One tide of glory, one unclouded blaze
 O'erflow thy courts: the Light himself shall shine
 Reveal'd, and God's eternal day be thine;
 The seas ** shall waste, the skies in smoke decay,
 Rocks fall to dust, and mountains melt away ; 106
 But fix'd His word, His saving power remains;
 Thy realm for ever lasts, thy own MESSIAH reigns!

IMITATIONS.

Ver 85. Rise, crown'd with light, imperial Salem, rise !] The thoughts of Isaiah, which compose the latter part of the poem, are wonderfully elevated, and much above those general exclamations of Virgil, which make the loftiest parts of his *Pollio*.

Magnus ab integro sæclorum nascitur ordo!

-----toto surget gens aurea mundo!

-----incipient magni procedere menses!

Aspice, venturo lætentur ut omnia sæclo! &c.

The reader needs only to turn to the passages of Isaiah here cited. P.

* Ch. lxxv. ver. 25.

† Ch. lx. ver. 1.

‡ Ch. lx. ver. 4.

|| Ch. lx. ver. 3.

§ Ch. lx. ver. 6.

¶ Ch. lx. ver. 19, 20.

** Ch. li. ver. 6. and Ch. liv. ver. 10.

THE RAPE OF THE LOCK.

AN HEROI-COMICAL POEM.

[Written in the Year 1712.]

TO MRS. ARABELLA FERMOR.

MADAM,

IT will be in vain to deny that I have some regard for this piece, since I dedicate it to you. Yet you may bear me witness, it was intended only to divert a few young ladies, who have good sense and good humour enough to laugh not only at their sex's little unguarded follies, but at their own. But as it was communicated with the air of a secret, it soon found its way into the world. An imperfect copy having been offered to a bookseller, you had the good-nature, for my sake, to consent to the publication of one more correct: this I was forced to before I had executed half my design, for the machinery was entirely wanting to complete it.

The machinery, Madam, is a term invented by the critics, to signify that part which the deities, angels, or dæmons, are made to act in a poem: for the ancient poets are in one respect like many modern ladies, let an action be ever so trivial in itself, they always make it appear of the utmost importance. These machines I determined to raise on a very new and odd foundation, the Rosicrusian doctrine of spirits.

I know how disagreeable it is to make use of hard words before a lady; but it is so much the concern of a poet to have his works understood, and particularly by your sex, that you must give me leave to explain two or three difficult terms.

The Rosicrusians are a people I must bring you acquainted with. The best account I know of them is in a French book called *Le Comte de Gabalis*, which both in its title and size, is so like a novel, that many of the fair sex have read it for one by mistake. According to these gentlemen, the four elements are

inhabited by spirits, which they call Sylphs, Gnomes, Nymphs, and Salamanders. The gnomes, or dæmons of earth, delight in mischief; but the sylphs, whose habitation is in the air, are the best-conditioned creatures imaginable: for they say, any mortal may enjoy the most intimate familiarities with these gentle spirits, upon a condition very easy to all true adepts, an inviolate preservation of chastity.

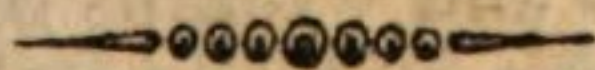
As to the following Cantos, all the passages of them are as fabulous as the vision at the beginning, or the transformation at the end; (except the loss of your hair, which I always mention with reverence.) The human persons are as fictitious as the airy ones; and the character of Belinda, as it is now managed, resembles you in nothing but in beauty.

If this poem had as many graces as there are in your person, or in your mind, yet I could never hope it should pass through the world half so uncensured as you have done. But let its fortune be what it will, mine is happy enough, to have given me this occasion of assuring you that I am, with the truest esteem,

MADAM,

Your most obedient humble servant,

A. POPE.



THE RAPE OF THE LOCK.

*Nolueram, Belinda, tuos violare capillos;
Sed juvat, hoc precibus me tribuisse tuis.* *Mart.*

CANTO I.

WHAT dire offence from am'rous causes springs,
What mighty contests rise from trivial things,
I sing—This verse to Caryl, Muse! is due:
This e'en Belinda may vouchsafe to view:
Slight is the subject, but not so the praise, 5
If she inspire, and he approve my lays.

Say what strange motive, goddess! could compel
A well-bred lord t' assault a gentle belle?

O say what stranger cause, yet unexplor'd,
 Could make a gentle belle reject a lord? 10
 In tasks so bold can little men engage?
 And in soft bosoms dwells such mighty rage?

Sol through white curtains shot a tim'rous ray,
 And op'd those eyes that must eclipse the day:
 Now lap-dogs give themselves the rousing shake,
 And sleepless lovers, just at twelve, awake: 16
 Thrice rung the bell, the slipper knock'd the ground,
 And the press'd watch return'd a silver sound.

Belinda still her downy pillow prest,
 Her guardian sylph prolong'd the balmy rest: 20
 'Twas he had summon'd to her silent bed
 The morning-dream that hover'd o'er her head:
 A youth more glitt'ring than a birthnight beau
 (That e'en in slumber caus'd her cheek to glow)
 Seem'd to her ear his winning lips to lay, 25
 And thus in whispers said, or seem'd to say:

“ Fairest of mortals, thou distinguish'd care
 Of thousand bright inhabitants of air!
 If e'er one vision touch'd thy infant thought,
 Of all the nurse and all the priest have taught; 30
 Of airy elves by moonlight-shadows seen,
 The silver token, and the circled green.
 Or virgins visited by angel pow'rs,
 With golden crowns and wreaths of heav'nly flow'rs;
 Hear and believe! thy own importance know, 35
 Nor bound thy narrow views to things below.
 Some secret truths, from learned pride conceal'd,
 To maids alone and children are reveal'd;
 What though no credit doubting wits may give?
 The fair and innocent shall still believe. 40

Know then, unnumber'd spirits round thee fly,
 The light militia of the lower sky:
 These, though unseen, are ever on the wing,
 Hang o'er the box, and hover round the ring.
 Think what an equipage thou hast in air, 45
 And view with scorn two pages and a chair.
 As now your own, our beings were of old,
 And once inclos'd in woman's beauteous mould;

Thence, by a soft transition, we repair
From earthly vehicles to those of air. 50

Think not, when woman's transient breath is fled,
That all her vanities at once are dead:

Succeeding vanities she still regards,
And though she plays no more, o'erlooks the cards.

Her joy in gilded chariots, when alive, 55
And love of ombre, after death survive.

For when the fair in all their pride expire,
To their first elements their souls retire:

The sprites of fiery termagants in flame
Mount up, and take a salamander's name. 60.

Soft yielding minds to water glide away,
And sip, with nymphs, their elemental tea.

The graver prude sinks downward to a gnome,
In search of mischief still on earth to roam.

The light coquettes in sylphs aloft repair, 65
And sport and flutter in the fields of air.

"Know further yet; whoever, fair and chaste,
Rejects mankind, is by some sylph embrac'd:
For spirits, freed from mortal laws, with ease
Assume what sexes and what shapes they please. 70

What guards the purity of melting maids,
In courtly balls, and midnight masquerades,
Safe from the treacherous friend, the daring spark,
The glance by day, the whisper in the dark,
When kind occasion prompts their warm desires,
When music softens, and when dancing fires? 76

'Tis but their sylph, the wise celestials know,
Though Honour is the word with men below.
Some nymphs there are too conscious of their face,
For life predestined to the gnomes' embrace. 80

These swell their prospects, and exalt their pride,
When offers are disdain'd, and love denied:

Then gay ideas croud the vacant brain,
While peers, and dukes, and all their sweeping train,
And garters, stars, and coronets appear, 85

And in soft sounds, 'Your Grace' salutes their ear.

'Tis these that early taint the female soul,
Instruct the eyes of young coquettes to roll,

Teach infant cheeks a bidden blush to know,
And little hearts to flutter at a beau. 90

“ Oft, when the world imagine women stray,
The sylphs through mystic mazes guide their way;
Through all the giddy circle they pursue,
And old impertinence expel by new.

What tender maid but must a victim fall 95

To one man's treat, but for another's ball?
When Florio speaks, what virgin could withstand,
If gentle Damon did not squeeze her hand?

With varying vanities, from ev'ry part,
They shift the moving toyshop of their heart; 100
Where wigs with wigs, with sword-knots sword-
knots strive,

Beaus banish beaus, and coaches coaches drive.
This erring mortals levity may call:

Oh, blind to truth! the sylphs contrive it all.

“ Of these am I, who thy protection claim, 105

A watchful sprite, and Ariel is my name.

Late, as I rang'd the crystal wilds of air,

In the clear mirror of thy ruling star,

I saw, alas! some dread event impend,

Ere to the main this morning sun descend, 110

But Heav'n reveals not what, or how, or where:

Warn'd by thy sylph, oh, pious maid, beware!

This to disclose is all thy guardian can:

Beware of all, but most beware of man!” [long,

He said; when Shock, who thought she slept too
Leap'd up, and wak'd his mistress with his tongue.

'Twas then, Belinda, if report say true,

Thy eyes first open'd on a billet-doux;

Wounds, charms, and ardours, were no sooner read,

But all the vision vanished from thy head. 120

And now, unveil'd, the toilet stands display'd,
Each silver vase in mystic order laid.

First, rob'd in white, the nymph intent adores,

With head uncover'd, the cosmetic pow'rs.

A heav'nly image in the glass appears, 125

To that she bends, to that her eyes she rears;

Th' inferior priestess, at her altar's side,
 Trembling begins the sacred rites of pride.
 Unnumber'd treasures ope at once, and here
 The various offerings of the world appear; 130
 From each she nicely culls with curious toil,
 And decks the goddess with the glittering spoil.
 This casket India's glowing gems unlocks,
 And all Arabia breathes from yonder box;
 The tortoise here and elephant unite, 135
 Transform'd to combs the speckled and the white
 Here files of pins extend their shining rows,
 Puffs, powders, patches, bibles, billet-doux.
 Now awful beauty puts on all its arms;
 The fair each moment rises in her charms, 140
 Repairs her smiles, awakens ev'ry grace,
 And calls forth all the wonders of her face;
 Sees by degrees a purer blush arise,
 And keener lightnings quicken in her eyes.
 The busy sylphs surround their darling care; 145
 These set the head, and those divide the hair;
 Some fold the sleeve, whilst others plait the gown;
 And Betty's prais'd for labours not her own.

CANTO II.

NOT with more glories, in th' ethereal plain,
 The sun first rises o'er the purpled main,
 Than, issuing forth, the rival of his beams
 Launch'd on the bosom of the silver Thames. 4
 Fair nymphs and well dress'd youths around her
 But ev'ry eye was fix'd on her alone. [shone;
 On her white breast a sparkling cross she wore,
 Which Jews might kiss, and Infidels adore.
 Her lively looks a sprightly mind disclose,
 Quick as her eyes, and as unfix'd as those: 10
 Favours to none, to all she smiles extends:
 Oft she rejects, but never once offends.
 Bright as the sun, her eyes the gazers strike,
 And, like the sun, they shine on all alike.
 Yet graceful ease, and sweetness void of pride, 15
 Might hide her faults, if belles had faults to hide:

If to her share some female errors fall,
Look on her face, and you'll forget them all.

This nymph, to the destruction of mankind,
Nourished two locks, which graceful hung behind
In equal curls, and well conspir'd to deck 21
With shining ringlets the smooth iv'ry neck.
Love in these labyrinths his slaves detains,
And mighty hearts are held in slender chains.
With hairy springes we the birds betray, 25
Slight lines of hair surprise the finny prey,
Fair tresses man's imperial race insnare,
And beauty draws us with a single hair.

Th' advent'rous baron the bright locks admir'd;
He saw, he wish'd, and to the prize aspir'd. 30
Resolv'd to win, he meditates the way,
By force to ravish, or by fraud betray;
For when success a lover's toil attends,
Few ask if fraud or force attain'd his ends.

For this, ere Phœbus rose, he had implor'd 35
Propitious Heav'n, and ev'ry power ador'd,
But chiefly Love---to Love an altar built,
Of twelve vast French romances, neatly gilt.
There lay three garters, half a pair of gloves,
And all the trophies of his former loves: 40
With tender billet-doux he lights the pyre,
And breathes three am'rous sighs to raise the fire.
Then prostrate falls, and begs with ardent eyes
Soon to obtain, and long possess the prize.
The pow'rs gave ear, and granted half his pray'r;
The rest the winds dispers'd in empty air. 46

But now secure the painted vessel glides,
The sun-beams trembling on the floating tides;
While melting music steals upon the sky,
And softened sounds along the waters die: 50
Smooth flow the waves, the zephyrs gently play,
Belinda smil'd, and all the world was gay.
All but the sylph---with careful thoughts opprest,
Th' impending woe sat heavy on his breast.
He summons straight his denizens of air; 55
The lucid squadrons round the sails repair:

Soft o'er the shrouds aërial whispers breathe,
 That seem'd but zephyrs to the train beneath.
 Some to the sun their insect-wings unfold,
 Waft on the breeze, or sink in clouds of gold; 60
 Transparent forms too fine for mortal sight,
 Their fluid bodies half dissolv'd in light,
 Loose to the wind their airy garments flew,
 Thin glitt'ring textures of the filmy dew,
 Dipt in the richest tincture of the skies, 65
 Where light disports in ever-mingling dyes,
 While every beam new transient colours flings,
 Colours that change whene'er they wave their wings.
 Amid the circle, on the gilded mast,
 Superior by the head, was Ariel plac'd; 70
 His purple pinions open'd to the sun,
 He rais'd his azure wand, and thus begun:—

“ Ye Sylphs and Sylphids, to your chief give ear;
 Fays, Fairies, Genii, Elves, and Dæmons, hear!
 Ye know the spheres, and various tasks assign'd
 By laws eternal to th' aërial kind. 76
 Some in the fields of purest æther play,
 And bask and whiten in the blaze of day:
 Some guide the course of wand'ring orbs on high,
 Or roll the planets through the boundless sky: 80
 Some, less refin'd, beneath the moon's pale light,
 Pursue the stars that shoot athwart the night,
 Or suck the mists in grosser air below,
 Or dip their pinions in the painted bow,
 Or brew fierce tempests on the wintry main, 85
 Or o'er the glebe distil the kindly rain:
 Others, on earth, o'er human race preside,
 Watch all their ways, and all their actions guide:
 Of these the chief the care of nations own,
 And guard with arms divine the British throne. 90

“ Our humbler province is to tend the fair,
 Not a less pleasing though less glorious care;
 To save the powder from too rude a gale,
 Nor let th' imprison'd essences exhale;
 To draw fresh colours from the vernal flow'rs; 95
 To steal from rainbows ere they drop in show'rs

A brighter wash; to curl their waving hairs,
 Assist their blushes, and inspire their airs:
 Nay oft, in dreams, invention we bestow,
 To change a flounce, or add a furbelow. 100

“ This day black omens threat the brightest fair
 That e'er deserv'd a watchful spirit's care;
 Some dire disaster, or by force or slight;
 But what, or where, the Fates have wrapp'd in night.
 Whether the nymph shall break Diana's law, 105
 Or some frail china-jar receive a flaw;
 Or stain her honour or her new brocade;
 Forget her pray'rs, or miss a masquerade;
 Or lose her heart, or necklace, at a ball;
 Or whether Heav'n has doom'd that Shock must fall.
 Haste then, ye Spirits! to your charge repair: 111
 The flutt'ring fan be Zephyretta's care;
 The drops to thee, Brillante, we consign;
 And, Momentilla, let the watch be thine;
 Do thou, Crispissa, tend her fav'rite lock; 115
 Ariel himself shall be the guard of Shock.

“ To fifty chosen sylphs, of special note,
 We trust th' important charge, the petticoat:
 Oft have we known that sevenfold fence to fail,
 Though stiff with hoops and arm'd with ribs of whale;
 Form a strong line about the silver bound, 121
 And guard the wide circumference around.

“ Whatever spirit, careless of his charge,
 His post neglects, or leaves the fair at large,
 Shall feel sharp vengeance soon o'ertake his sins,
 Be stopp'd in vials, or transfix'd with pins; 126
 Or plung'd in lakes of bitter washes lie,
 Or wedged whole ages in a bodkin's eye:
 Gums and pomatums shall his flight restrain,
 While clogg'd he beats his silken wings in vain; 130
 Or allum styptics with contracting power
 Shrink his thin essence like a shrivell'd flower:
 Or, as Ixion fix'd, the wretch shall feel
 The giddy motion of the whirling mill;
 In fumes of burning chocolate shall glow, 135
 And tremble at the sea that froths below!”

He spoke; the spirits from the sails descend;
 Some, orb in orb, around the nymph extend;
 Some thread the mazy ringlets of her hair;
 Some hang upon the pendants of her ear; 140
 With beating hearts the dire event they wait,
 Anxious, and trembling for the birth of fate.

CANTO III.

CLOSE by those meads for ever crown'd with flow'rs,
 Where Thames with pride surveys his rising tow'rs,
 There stands a structure of majestic frame,
 Which from the neighb'ring Hampton takes its name.
 Here Britain's statesmen oft the fall foredoom 5
 Of foreign tyrants, and of nymphs at home;
 Here thou, great Anna! whom three realms obey,
 Dost sometimes counsel take---and sometimes tea.

Hither the heroes and the nymphs resort,
 To taste awhile the pleasures of a court; 10
 In various talk th' instructive hours they past,
 Who gave the ball, or paid the visit last;
 One speaks the glory of the British Queen,
 And one describes a charming Indian screen;
 A third interprets motions, looks, and eyes; 15
 At ev'ry word a reputation dies.
 Snuff, or the fan, supply each pause of chat,
 With singing, laughing, ogling, *and all that*.

Meanwhile, declining from the noon of day.
 The sun obliquely shoots his burning ray; 20
 The hungry judges soon the sentence sign,
 And wretches hang, that jurymen may dine;
 The merchant from th' Exchange returns in peace,
 And the long labours of the toilet cease.
 Belinda now, whom thirst of fame invites, 25
 Burns to encounter two advent'rous knights,
 At ombre singly to decide their doom,
 And swells her breast with conquests yet to come.
 Straight the three bands prepar'd in arms to join,
 Each band the number of the sacred Nine. 30
 Soon as she spreads her hand, th' aërial guard
 Descend, and sit on each important card;

First Ariel perch'd upon a Matadore,
 Then each according to the rank they bore;
 For sylphs yet mindful of their ancient race, 35
 Are, as when women, wond'rous fond of place.

Behold four kings in majesty rever'd,
 With hoary whiskers and a fork'd beard;
 And four fair queens, whose hands sustain a flow'r,
 Th' expressive emblem of their softer pow'r; 40
 Four knaves, in garbs succinct, a trusty band,
 Caps on their heads, and halberts in their hand;
 And party-coloured troops, a shining train,
 Draw forth to combat on the velvet plain.

The skilful nymph reviews her force with care: 45
 "Let spades be trumps!" she said, and trumps they

Now move to war her sable Matadores, [were.
 In show like leaders of the swarthy Moors.

Spadillio first, unconquerable lord,
 Led off two captive trumps, and swept the board. 50

As many more Manilio forc'd to yield,
 And march'd a victor from the verdant field.

Him Basto follow'd, but his fate, more hard,
 Gain'd but one trump and one plebeian card.

With his broad sabre next a chief in years, 55
 The hoary majesty of Spades appears,

Puts forth one manly leg, to sight reveal'd;
 The rest his many colour'd robe conceal'd.

The rebel knave, who dares his prince engage,
 Proves the just victim of his royal rage. 60

Ev'n mighty Pam, that kings and queens o'erthrew,
 And mow'd down armies in the fights of Lu,

Sad chance of war! now destitute of aid,
 Falls undistinguish'd by the victor Spade!

Thus far both armies to Belinda yield: 65
 Now to the baron fate inclines the field.

His warlike Amazon her host invades,
 Th' imperial consort to the crown of Spades.

The Club's black tyrant first her victim died,
 Spite of his haughty mien, and barb'rous pride; 70

What boots the regal circle on his head,
 His giant limbs, in state unwieldy spread;

That long behind he trails his pompous robe,
And, of all monarchs, only grasps the globe?

The baron now his Diamonds pours apace; 75
Th' embroider'd king, who shews but half his face,
And his refulgent queen, with pow'rs combin'd,
Of broken troops, an easy conquest find.
Clubs, Diamonds, Hearts, in wild disorder seen,
With throngs promiscuous strew the level green. 80

Thus when dispers'd a routed army runs,
Of Asia's troops, and Afric's sable sons,
With like confusion diff'rent nations fly,
Of various habit, and of various dye;
The pierc'd battalions disunited fall, 85
In heaps on heaps; one fate o'erwhelms them all.

The knave of Diamonds tries his wily arts,
And wins (O shameful chance!) the queen of Hearts.
At this, the blood the virgin's cheek forsook,
A livid paleness spreads o'er all her look; 90
She sees, and trembles at th' approaching ill,
Just in the jaws of ruin, and Codille.

And now (as oft in some distemper'd state)
On one nice trick depends the general fate.
An ace of Hearts steps forth: the king unseen 95
Lurk'd in her hand, and mourn'd his captive queen:
He springs to vengeance with an eager pace,
And falls like thunder on the prostrate ace.

The nymph, exulting, fills with shouts the sky;
The walls, the woods, and long canals, reply. 100

O thoughtless mortals! ever blind to Fate,
Too soon dejected, and too soon elatē.
Sudden these honours shall be snatch'd away,
And curs'd for ever this victorious day.

For lo! the board with cups and spoons is crown'd,
The berries crackle, and the mill turns round; 105
On shining altars of Japan they raise
The silver lamp; the fiery spirits blaze:
From silver spouts the grateful liquors glide,
While China's earth receives the smoking tide: 110
At once they gratify their scent and taste,
And frequent cups prolong the rich repast.

Straight hover round the fair her airy band;
 Some, as she sipp'd, the fuming liquor fann'd,
 Some o'er her lap their careful plumes display'd,
 Trembling, and conscious of the rich brocade. 116

Coffee (which makes the politician wise,
 And see through all things with his half-shut eyes)
 Sent up in vapours to the baron's brain
 New stratagems, the radiant lock to gain. 120

Ah cease, rash youth! desist ere 'tis too late;
 Fear the just gods, and think of Scylla's fate!
 Chang'd to a bird and sent to flit in air,
 She dearly pays for Nisus' injured hair.

But when to mischief mortals bend their will,
 How soon they find fit instruments of ill! 126

Just then Clarissa drew with tempting grace
 A two-edg'd weapon from her shining case:
 So ladies, in romance assist their knight,
 Present the spear, and arm him for the fight. 130

He takes the gift with rev'rence, and extends
 The little engine on his fingers' ends;
 This just behind Belinda's neck he spread,
 As o'er the fragrant steams she bends her head.
 Swift to the lock a thousand sprites repair, 135

A thousand wings, by turns, blow back the hair;
 And thrice they twitch'd the diamond in her ear;
 Thrice she look'd back, and thrice the foe drew near,
 Just in that instant, anxious Ariel sought
 The close recesses of the virgin's thought: 140

As on the nosegay in her breast reclin'd,
 He watch'd th' ideas rising in her mind,
 Sudden he view'd, in spite of all her art,
 An earthly lover lurking at her heart.
 Amaz'd, confus'd, he found his pow'r expir'd; 145
 Resign'd to fate, and with a sigh retir'd.

The peer now spreads the glitt'ring forfex wide,
 T' inclose the lock; now joins it to divide.
 Ev'n then, before the fatal engine clos'd,
 A wretched sylph too fondly interpos'd; 150
 Fate urg'd the sheers, and cut the sylph in twain,
 (But airy substance soon unites again;)

The meeting points the sacred hair dissever
From the fair head, for ever, and for ever!

Then flash'd the livid light'ning from her eyes,
And screams of horror rend th' affrighted skies. 156
Not louder shrieks to pitying Heav'n are cast,
When husbands, or when lap-dogs, breathe their last;
Or when rich China vessels, fall'n from high,
In glitt'ring dust and painted fragments lie! 160

"Let wreaths of triumph now my temples twine,"
The victor cry'd, "the glorious prize is mine!
While fish in streams, or birds delight in air,
Or in a coach and six the British fair,
As long as Atalantis shall be read, 165
Or the small pillow grace a lady's bed,
While visits shall be paid on solemn days,
When numerous waxlights in bright order blaze,
While nymphs take treats, or assignations give,
So long my honour, name, and praise shall live! 170
What time would spare from steel receives its date,
And monuments, like men, submit to fate!
Steel could the labour of the gods destroy,
And strike to dust the imperial tow'rs of Troy;
Steel could the works of mortal pride confound, 175
And hew triumphal arches to the ground.
What wonder then, fair nymph! thy hair should feel
The conquering force of unresisted steel?"

CANTO IV.

BUT anxious cares the pensive nymph opprest,
And secret passions labour'd in her breast.
Not youthful kings in battle seiz'd alive,
Not scornful virgins who their charms survive,
Not ardent lovers robb'd of all their bliss, 5
Not ancient ladies when refus'd a kiss.
Not tyrants fierce that unrepenting die,
Not Cynthia when her mantua's pinn'd awry,
E'er felt such rage, resentment, and despair,
As thou, sad virgin! for thy ravish'd hair. 10

For, that sad moment, when the sylphs withdrew,
And Ariel weeping from Belinda flew,

Umbriel, a dusky, melancholy sprite,
 As ever sully'd the fair face of light,
 Down to the central earth, his proper scene, 15
 Repair'd to search the gloomy cave of Splen.

Swift on his sooty pinions flits the gnome,
 And in a vapour reach'd the dismal dome.
 No cheerful breeze this sullen region knows;
 The dreaded east is all the wind that blows. 20

Here in a grotto, shelter'd close from air,
 And screen'd in shades, from day's detested glare,
 She sighs for ever on her pensive bed,
 Pain at her side, and Megrim at her head.

Two handmaids wait the throne; alike in place,
 But diff'ring far in figure and in face, 26
 Here stood Ill-nature, like an ancient maid,
 Her wrinkled form in black and white array'd!

With store of pray'rs for mornings, nights, and noons.
 Her hand is fill'd; her bosom with lampoons, 30

There Affectation, with a sickly mien,
 Shows in her cheek the roses of eighteen,
 Practis'd to lisp, and hang the head aside,
 Faints into airs, and languishes with pride,
 On the rich quilt sinks with becoming woe, 35
 Wrapt in a gown, for sickness, and for shew.

The fair ones feel such maladies as these,
 When each new night-dress give a new disease.

A constant vapour o'er the palace flies;
 Strange phantoms rising as the mists arise; 40
 Dreadful as hermits' dreams in haunted shades,
 Or bright as visions of expiring maids.

Now glaring fiends, and snakes on rolling spires,
 Pale spectres, gaping tombs, and purple fires;
 Now lakes of liquid gold, Elysian scenes, 45
 And crystal domes, and angels in machines.

Unnumber'd throngs on ev'ry side are seen,
 Of bodies chang'd to various forms by Spleen.
 Here living tea-pots stand, one arm held out,
 One bent; the handle this, and that the spout; 50
 A pipkin there, like Homer's tripod walks;
 Here sighs a jar, and there a goosepye talks;

Men prove with child as powerful fancy works;
And maids, turn'd bottles, call aloud for corks.

Safe past the gnome through this fantastic band,
A branch of healing spleenwort in his hand. 56

Then thus address'd the pow'r—"Hail, wayward
Who rule the sex to fifty from fifteen: [queen!

Parent of vapours and of female wit,
Who give th' hysteric or poetic fit, 60

On various tempers act by various ways,
Make some take physic, others scribble plays;

Who cause the proud their visits to delay,
And send the godly in a pet to pray:

A nymph there is that all your pow'r disdains, 65
And thousands more in equal mirth maintains.

But oh! if e'er thy gnome could spoil a grace,
Or raise a pimple on a beauteous face,

Like citron-waters matrons' cheeks inflame,
Or change complexions at a losing game; 70

If e'er with airy horns I planted heads,

Or rumpled petticoats, or tumbled beds,

Or caus'd suspicion when no soul was rude,

Or discompos'd the head-dress of a prude,

Or e'er to costive lap-dog gave disease, 75

Which not the tears of brightest eyes could ease;

Hear me, and touch Belinda with chagrin;

That single act gives half the world the spleen."

The goddess, with a discontented air,
Seems to reject him, though she grants his pray'r.

A wondrous bag with both her hands she binds, 81

Like that where once Ulysses held the winds;

There she collects the force of female lungs,

Sighs, sobs, and passions, and the war of tongues.

A vial next she fills with fainting fears, 85

Soft sorrows, melting griefs, and flowing tears.

The gnome rejoicing bears her gifts away,

Spreads his black wings, and slowly mounts to day.

Sunk in Thalestris' arms the nymph he found,

Her eyes dejected, and her hair unbound, 90

Full o'er their heads the swelling bag he rent,

And all the furies issued at the vent.

Belinda burns with more than mortal ire,
 And fierce Thalestris fans the rising fire. 94
 "O wretched maid!" she spread her hands, and cry'd,
 (While Hampton's echoes, "Wretched maid!" reply'd)
 "Was it for this you took such constant care
 The bodkin, comb, and essence to prepare?
 For this your locks in paper durance bound?
 For this with torturing irons wreath'd around? 100
 For this with fillets strain'd your tender head?
 And bravely bore the double loads of lead?
 Gods! shall the ravisher display your hair,
 While the fops envy, and the ladies stare!
 Honour forbid! at whose unrivall'd shrine 105
 Ease, pleasure, virtue, all our sex resign.
 Methinks already I your tears survey,
 Already hear the horrid things they say,
 Already see you a degraded toast,
 And all your honour in a whisper lost! 110
 How shall I, then, your hapless fame defend?
 'Twill then be infamy to seem your friend!
 And shall this prize, th' inestimable prize,
 Expos'd through crystal to the gazing eyes,
 And heighten'd by the diamond's circling rays, 115
 On that rapacious hand for ever blaze?
 Sooner shall grass in Hyde-Park circus grow,
 And wits take lodgings in the sound of Bow:
 Sooner let earth, air, sea, to chaos fall,
 Men, monkeys, lap-dogs, parrots, perish all!" 120
 She said; then raging to Sir Plume repairs,
 And bids her beau demand the precious hairs:
 (Sir Plume, of amber snuff-box justly vain,
 And the nice conduct of a clouded cane,)
 With earnest eyes, and round unthinking face, 125
 He first the snuff-box open'd, then the case,
 And thus broke out—"My Lord, why, what the devil!
 Z—ds! damn the lock! 'fore Gad, you must be civil!
 Plague on't! 'tis past a jest—nay, prithee, pox!
 Give her the hair."—He spoke, and rapp'd his box.
 "It grieves me much (replied the peer again) 131
 Who speaks so well should ever speak in vain:

But by this lock, this sacred lock, I swear,
 (Which never more shall join its parted hair;
 Which never more its honours shall renew,
 Clipp'd from the lovely head where late it grew,) 135
 That, while my nostrils draw the vital air,
 This hand, which won it, shall for ever wear."
 He spoke, and speaking, in proud triumph spread
 The long contended honours of her head. 140

But Umbriel, hateful gnome, forbears not so;
 He breaks the vial whence the sorrows flow.
 Then see! the nymph in beauteous grief appears,
 Her eyes half languishing, half drown'd in tears;
 On her heav'd bosom hung her drooping head, 145
 Which with a sigh she rais'd; and thus she said:—

“ For ever curs'd be this detested day,
 Which snatch'd my best, my fav'rite curl away!
 Happy! ah, ten times happy had I been,
 If Hampton Court these eyes had never seen! 150
 Yet am not I the first mistaken maid,
 By love of courts to numerous ills betray'd.
 Oh, had I rather unadmir'd remain'd
 In some lone isle, or distant northern land;
 Where the gilt chariot never marks the way, 155
 Where none learn ombre, none e'er taste bohea!
 There kept my charms conceal'd from mortal eye,
 Like roses that in deserts bloom and die.
 What mov'd my mind with youthful lords to roam?
 O had I stay'd, and said my pray'rs at home! 160
 'Twas this the morning omens seem'd to tell;
 Thrice from my trembling hand the patch-box fell;
 The tott'ring china shook without a wind;
 Nay, Poll sat mute, and Shock was most unkind!
 A sylph, too, warn'd me of the threats of fate, 165
 In mystic visions, now believ'd too late!
 See the poor remnants of these slighted hairs!
 My hands shall rend what e'en thy rapine spares:
 These in two sable ringlets taught to break,
 Once gave new beauties to the snowy neck; 170
 The sister-lock now sits uncouth, alone,
 And in its fellow's fate foresees its own;

Uncurl'd it hangs, the fatal sheers demands,
 And tempts once more thy sacrilegious hands.
 Oh, hadst thou, cruel! been content to seize 175
 Hairs less in sight, or any hairs but these."

CANTO V.

SHE said: the pitying audience melt in tears;
 But Fate and Jove had stopp'd the Baron's ears.
 In vain Thalestris with reproach assails,
 For who can move when fair Belinda fails?
 Not half so fix'd the Trojan could remain, 5
 While Anna begg'd and Dido rag'd in vain.
 Then grave Clarissa graceful wav'd her fan;
 Silence ensued, and thus the nymph began:---
 "Say, why are beauties prais'd and honour'd most,
 The wise man's passion, and the vain man's toast?
 Why deck'd with all the land and sea afford, 11
 Why angels call'd, and angel-like ador'd?
 Why round our coaches crowd the white-glov'd beaus?
 Why bows the side-box from its inmost rows?
 How vain are all these glories, all our pains, 15
 Unless good sense preserve what beauty gains;
 That men may say, when we the front-box grace,
 Behold the first in virtue as in face!
 Oh! if to dance all night, and dress all day,
 Charm'd the small-pox, or chas'd old age away, 20
 Who would not scorn what housewife's cares produce,
 Or who would learn one earthly thing of use?
 To patch, nay ogle, might become a saint;
 Nor could it sure be such a sin to paint.
 But since, alas! frail beauty must decay; 25
 Curl'd or uncurl'd, since locks will turn to grey;
 Since painted, or not painted, all shall fade,
 And she who scorns a man must die a maid;
 What then remains, but well our pow'r to use,
 And keep good-humour still whate'er we lose? 30
 And trust me, dear! good-humour can prevail,
 When airs, and flights, and screams, and scolding fail.
 Beauties in vain their pretty eyes may roll;
 Charms strike the sight, but merit wins the soul."

So spoke the dame, but no applause ensued; 35
Belinda frown'd, Thalestris call'd her prude.

"To arms, to arms!" the fierce virago cries,
And swift as lightning to the combat flies.
All side in parties, and begin th' attack;
Fans clap, silks rustle, and tough whalebones crack;
Heroes' and heroines' shouts confus'dly rise, 41
And bass and treble voices strike the skies.

No common weapons in their hands are found,
Like gods they fight, nor dread a mortal wound.

So when bold Homer makes the gods engage, 45
And heav'nly breasts with human passions rage;
'Gainst Pallas, Mars; Latona, Hermes arms;
And all Olympus rings with loud alarms;
Jove's thunder roars, heav'n trembles all around,
Blue Neptune storms, the bellowing deeps resound;
Earth shakes her nodding tow'rs, the ground gives
And the pale ghosts start at the flash of day! [way,

Triumphant Umbriel, on a sconce's height,
Clapp'd his glad wings, and sat to view the fight;
Propp'd on their bodkin spears, the sprites survey
The growing combat, or assist the fray. 56

While through the press enrag'd Thalestris flies,
And scatters death around from both her eyes,
A beau and witling perish'd in the throng;
One died in metaphor, and one in song. 60

"O cruel nymph! a living death I bear,"
Cried Dapperwit, and sunk beside his chair,
A mournful glance Sir Fopling upwards cast,
"Those eyes are made so killing"---was his last.
Thus on Mæander's flow'ry margin lies 65
Th' expiring swan, and as he sings he dies.

When bold Sir Plume had drawn Clarissa down,
Chloe stepp'd in, and kill'd him with a frown;
She smil'd to see the doughty hero slain,
But, at her smile, the beau reviv'd again. 70

Now Jove suspends his golden scales in air,
Weighs the men's wits against the lady's hair:
The doubtful beam long nods from side to side;
At length the wits mount up, the hairs subside.

See fierce Belinda on the baron flies, 75
 With more than usual lightning in her eyes;
 Nor fear'd the chief th' unequal fight to try,
 Who sought no more than on his foe to die.
 But this bold lord, with manly strength endued,
 She with one finger and a thumb subdued: 80
 Just where the breath of life his nostrils drew,
 A charge of snuff the wily virgin threw;
 The gnomes direct, to ev'ry atom just,
 The pungent grains of titillating dust.
 Sudden, with starting tears each eye o'erflows, 85
 And the high dome re-echoes to his nose.
 "Now meet thy fate," incens'd Belinda cried,
 And drew a deadly bodkin from her side.
 (The same, his ancient personage to deck,
 Her great great grandsire wore about his neck, 90
 In three seal-rings; which after, melted down,
 Form'd a vast buckle for his widow's gown:
 Her infant grandame's whistle next it grew,
 The bells she jingled, and the whistle blew;
 'Then in a bodkin grac'd her mother's hairs, 95
 Which long she wore, and now Belinda wears.)
 "Boast not my fall (he cried), insulting foe!
 Thou by some other shalt be laid as low.
 Nor think to die dejects my lofty mind;
 All that I dread is leaving you behind! 100
 Rather than so, ah, let me still survive,
 And burn in Cupid's flames---but burn alive."
 "Restore the lock!" she cries; and all around
 "Restore the lock!" the vaulted roofs rebound.
 Not fierce Othello in so loud a strain 105
 Roar'd for the handkerchief that caus'd his pain.
 But see how oft ambitious aims are cross'd,
 And chiefs contend till all the prize is lost!
 The lock, obtain'd with guilt, and kept with pain,
 In ev'ry place is sought, but sought in vain: 110
 With such a prize no mortal must be blest,
 So heav'n decrees! with heav'n who can contest?
 Some thought it mounted to the lunar sphere,
 Since all things lost on earth are treasur'd there:

There heroes' wits are kept in pond'rous vases, 115
 And beaux' in snuff-boxes and tweezer-cases;
 There broken vows, and death-bed alms are found,
 And lovers' hearts with ends of ribband bound,
 The courtier's promises, and sick men's pray'rs,
 The smiles of harlots, and the tears of heirs, 120
 Cages for gnats, and chains to yoke a flea,
 Dried butterflies, and tomes of casuistry.

But trust the Muse---she saw it upwards rise,
 Though mark'd by none but quick poetic eyes:
 (So Rome's great founder to the Heav'ns withdrew,
 To Proculus alone confess'd in view,) 126
 A sudden star, it shot through liquid air,
 And drew behind a radiant trail of hair.
 Not Berenice's locks first rose so bright,
 The Heav'ns bespangling with dishevell'd light. 130
 The sylphs behold it kindling as it flies,
 And pleas'd pursue its progress through the skies.

This the beau monde shall from the Mall survey,
 And hail with music its propitious ray;
 This the blest lover shall for Venus take, 135
 And send up vows from Rosamonda's lake;
 This Partridge soon shall view in cloudless skies,
 When next he looks through Galilæo's eyes;
 And hence th' egregious wizard shall foredoom
 The fate of Louis, and the fall of Rome. 140

Then cease, bright nymph! to mourn thy ravish'd
 hair,
 Which adds new glory to the shining sphere!
 Not all the tresses that fair head can boast,
 Shall draw such envy as the lock you lost.
 For after all the murders of your eye, 145
 When, after millions slain, yourself shall die;
 When those fair suns shall set, as set they must,
 And all those tresses shall be laid in dust,
 This Lock the Muse shall consecrate to fame,
 And 'midst the stars inscribe Belinda's name. 150

AN
ESSAY ON CRITICISM.

WRITTEN IN THE YEAR 1709.

PART I.

Introduction. That it is as great a fault to judge ill as to write ill, and a more dangerous one to the public, v. 1. That a true taste is as rare to be found as a true genius, v. 9---18. That most men are born with some taste, but spoiled by false education, v. 19---25. The multitude of critics, and causes of them, v. 26---45. That we are to study our own taste, and know the limits of it, v. 46---67. Nature the best guide of judgment, v. 68---87 : improved by art and rules, which are but methodized nature, v. 88. Rules derived from the practice of the ancient poets, v. 88---118 ; that therefore the ancients are necessary to be studied by a critic, particularly Homer and Virgil, v. 118---140. Of licences, and the use of them, by the ancients, v. 141---180. Reverence due to the ancients, and praise of them, v. 181, &c.

'Tis hard to say if greater want of skill
Appear in writing or in judging ill ;
But of the two less dangerous is th' offence
To tire our patience than mislead our sense :
Some few in that, but numbers err in this, 5
Ten censure wrong, for one that writes amiss ;
A fool might once himself alone expose ;
Now one in verse makes many more in prose.
'Tis with our judgments as our watches, none
Go just alike, yet each believes his own. 10
In poets as true genius is but rare,
True taste as seldom is the critic's share ;
Both must alike from Heav'n derive their light,
These born to judge as well as those to write.
Let such teach others who themselves excel, 15
And censure freely who have written well.
Authors are partial to their wit, 'tis true,
But are not critics to their judgment too ?
Yet if we look more closely we shall find
Most have the seeds of judgment in their mind : 20

Nature affords at least a glimm'ring light;
 The lines, tho' touch'd but faintly, are drawn right:
 But as the slightest sketch, if justly trac'd,
 Is by ill-colouring but the more disgrac'd,
 So by false learning is good sense defac'd: 25 }
 Some are bewilder'd in the maze of schools,
 And some made coxcombs Nature meant but fools;
 In search of wit these lose their common sense,
 And then turn critics in their own defence:
 Each burns alike, who can or cannot write, 30
 Or with a rival's or an eunuch's spite.
 All fools have still an itching to deride,
 And fain would be upon the laughing side.
 If Mævius scribble in Apollo's spite,
 There are who judge still worse than he can write.

Some have at first for wits, then poets past, 36
 Turn'd critics next, and prov'd plain fools at last.
 Some neither can for wits nor critics pass,
 As heavy mules are neither horse nor ass.
 Those half-learn'd wittings, num'rous in our isle, 40
 As half-form'd insects on the banks of Nile;
 Unfinish'd things, one knows not what to call,
 Their generation's so equivocal;
 To tell them would an hundred tongues require,
 Or one vain wit's, that might an hundred tire. 45

But you who seek to give and merit fame,
 And justly bear a critic's noble name,
 Be sure yourself and your own reach to know,
 How far your genius, taste, and learning go;
 Launch not beyond your depth, but be discreet, 50
 And mark that point where sense and dulness meet.

Nature to all things fix'd the limits fit,
 And wisely curb'd proud man's pretending wit.
 As on the land while here the ocean gains,
 In other parts it leaves wide sandy plains: 55
 Thus in the soul while memory prevails,
 The solid pow'r of understanding fails;
 Where beams of warm imagination play,
 The memory's soft figures melt away.

One science only will one genius fit; 60
 So vast is art, so narrow human wit:
 Not only bounded to peculiar arts,
 But oft in those confin'd to single parts.
 Like kings we lose the conquests gain'd before,
 By vain ambition still to make them more: 65
 Each might his sev'ral province well command,
 Would all but stoop to what they understand.

First follow Nature, and your judgment frame
 By her just standard, which is still the same:
 Unerring Nature! still divinely bright, 70
 One clear, unchang'd, and universal light,
 Life, force, and beauty, must to all impart,
 At once the source, and end, and test of art.
 Art from that fund each just supply provides,
 Works without shew, and without pomp presides:
 In some fair body thus th' informing soul 76
 With spirits feeds, with vigour fills the whole;
 Each motion guides, and ev'ry nerve sustains,
 Itself unseen, but in th' effects remains.
 Some to whom Heav'n in wit has been profuse 80
 Want as much more to turn it to its use;
 For wit and judgment often are at strife;
 Tho' meant each other's aid, like man and wife.
 'Tis more to guide than spur the Muses' steed,
 Restrain his fury than provoke his speed: 85
 The winged courser, like a generous horse,
 Shows most true mettle when you check his course.

Those rules of old, discover'd, not devis'd,
 Are Nature still, but Nature methodiz'd:
 Nature, like liberty, is but restrain'd 90
 By the same laws which first herself ordain'd.

Hear how learn'd Greece her useful rules indites,
 When to repress and when indulge our flights:
 High on Parnassus' top her sons she show'd,
 And pointed out those arduous paths they trod; 95
 Held from afar, aloft, th' immortal prize,
 And urg'd the rest by equal steps to rise.
 Just precepts thus from great examples giv'n,
 She drew from them what they deriv'd from Heav'n;

The generous critic fann'd the poet's fire, 100
 And taught the world with reason to admire.
 Then Criticism the Muse's handmaid prov'd
 To dress her charms, and make her more belov'd;
 But following wits from that intention stray'd;
 Who could not win the mistress woo'd the maid;
 Against the poets their own arms they turn'd, 106
 Sure to hate most the men from whom they learn'd.
 So modern 'pothecaries, taught the art
 By doctors' bills to play the doctor's part,
 Bold in the practice of mistaken rules, 110
 Prescribe, apply, and call their masters fools.
 Some on the leaves of ancient authors prey;
 Nor time nor moths e'er spoil'd so much as they:
 Some dryly plain; without invention's aid,
 Write dull receipts how poems may be made: 115
 These leave the sense their learning to display,
 And those explain the meaning quite away.

You then, whose judgment the right course would
 Know well each ancient's proper character; [steer,
 His fable, subjects, scope in ev'ry page; 120
 Religion, country, genius of his age:
 Without all these at once before your eyes,
 Cavil you may, but never criticise.
 Be Homer's works your study and delight,
 Read them by day, and meditate by night; 125
 Thence form your judgment, thence your maxims
 bring,

And trace the Muses upward to their spring.
 Still with itself compar'd his text peruse;
 And let your comment be the Mantuan muse.

When first young Maro, in his boundless mind,
 A work t' outlast immortal Rome design'd, 131
 Perhaps he seem'd above the critic's law,
 And but from Nature's fountains scorn'd to draw:
 But when t' examine ev'ry part he came,
 Nature and Homer were, he found, the same. 135
 Convinc'd, amaz'd, he checks the bold design,
 And rules as strict his labour'd work confine
 As if the Stagirite o'erlook'd each line. }

Learn hence for ancient rules a just esteem;
To copy Nature is to copy them. 140

Some beauties yet no precepts can declare,
For there's a happiness as well as care.
Music resembles poetry; in each
Are nameless graces, which no methods teach,
And which a master hand alone can reach, 145 }
If, where the rules not far enough extend,
(Since rules were made but to promote their end,)
Some lucky licence answer to the full
Th' intent propos'd, that licence is a rule.

Thus Pegasus, a nearer way to take, 150
May boldly deviate from the common track.
From vulgar bounds with brave disorder part,
And snatch a grace beyond the reach of art,
Which, without passing thro' the judgment, gains
The heart, and all its end at once attains, 155

In prospects thus some objects please our eyes,
Which out of Nature's common order rise, }
The shapeless rock, or hanging precipice.
Great wits sometimes may gloriously offend,
And rise to faults true critics dare not mend. 160

But tho' the ancients thus their rules invade,
(As kings dispense with laws themselves have made,)
Moderns, beware! or if you must offend
Against the precept, ne'er transgress its end;
Let it be seldom, and compell'd by need; 165
And have at least the precedent to plead;
The critic else proceeds without remorse,
Seizes your fame, and put his laws in force.

I know there are to whose presumptuous thoughts
Those freer beauties ev'n in them seem faults. 170
Some figures monstrous and mis-shap'd appear,
Consider'd singly or beheld too near,
Which but proportion'd to their light or place,
Due distance reconciles to form and grace.

A prudent chief not always must display 175
His pow'rs in equal ranks and fair array,
But with th' occasion and the place comply,
Conceal his force, nay, seem sometimes to fly.

Those oft are stratagems which errors seem ;
Nor is it Homer nods, but we that dream . 130

Still green with bays each ancient altar stands
Above the reach of sacrilegious hands,
Secure from flames, from envy's fiercer rage,
Destructive war, and all-involving age.
See from each clime the learn'd their incense bring!
Hear in all tongues consenting pæans ring! 186

In praise so just let ev'ry voice be join'd,
And fill the general chorus of mankind.
Hail, bards triumphant! born in happier days,
Immortal heirs of universal praise! 190

Whose honours with increase of ages grow,
As streams roll down, enlarging as they flow;
Nations unborn your mighty name shall sound,
And worlds applaud that must not yet be found!
O may some spark of your celestial fire 195

The last, the meanest, of your sons inspire,
(That on weak wings, from far, pursues your flights,
Glow's while he reads, but trembles as he writes,)
To teach vain wits a science little known,
T' admire superior sense, and doubt their own! 200

PART II.

Causes hindering a true judgment. 1. Pride, v. 5. 2. Imperfect learning, v. 15. 3. Judging by parts, and not by the whole, v. 33---88. Critics in wit, language, versification only, v. 89, 105, 137, &c. 4. Being too hard to please, or too apt to admire, v. 184. 5. Partiality---too much love to a sect---to the ancients or moderns, v. 194. 6. Prejudice or prevention, v. 208. 7. Singularity, v. 224. 8. Inconstancy, v. 230. 9. Party-spirit, v. 252, &c. 10. Envy, v. 266. Against envy, and in praise of good-nature, v. 308, &c. When severity is chiefly to be used by critics, v. 326, &c.

Of all the causes which conspire to blind
Man's erring judgment, and misguide the mind,
What the weak head with strongest bias rules,
Is pride, the never-failing vice of fools.
Whatever Nature has in worth denied, 5
She gives in large recruits of needful pride:

For as in bodies, thus in souls, we find,
What wants in blood and spirits swell'd with wind:
Pride, where wit fails, steps in to our defence,
And fills up all the mighty void of sense: 10
If once right reason drives that cloud away,
Truth breaks upon us with resistless day.
Trust not yourself; but your defects to know,
Make use of ev'ry friend---and ev'ry foe.
A little learning is a dangerous thing; 15
Drink deep, or taste not the Pierian spring:
There shallow draughts intoxicate the brain,
And drinking largely sobers us again.
Fir'd at first sight with what the Muse imparts,
In fearless youth we tempt the heights of arts; 20
While from the bounded level of our mind
Short views we take, nor see the lengths behind;
But more advanc'd, behold with strange surprise,
New distant scenes of endless science rise!
So pleas'd at first the tow'ring Alps we try, 25
Mount o'er the vales, and seem to tread the sky!
Th' eternal snows appear already past,
And the first clouds and mountains seem the last
But those attain'd, we tremble to survey,
The growing labours of the lengthen'd way; 30
Th' increasing prospect tires our wand'ring eyes,
Hills peep o'er hills, and Alps on Alps arise!
A perfect judge will read each work of wit
With the same spirit that its author writ;
Survey the whole, nor seek slight faults to find 35
Where nature moves, and rapture warms the mind;
Nor lose, for that malignant dull delight,
The gen'rous pleasure to be charm'd with wit.
But in such lays as neither ebb nor flow,
Correctly cold, and regularly low, 40
That shunning faults one quiet tenor keep,
We cannot blame indeed---but we may sleep.
In wit, as nature, what affects our hearts
Is not th' exactness of peculiar parts:
'Tis not a lip nor eye we beauty call. 45
But the joint force and full result of all.

Thus when we view some well-proportion'd dome,
(The world's just wonder, and ev'n thine, O Rome!)
No single parts unequally surprise,
All comes united to th' admiring eyes; 50
No monstrous height, or breadth, or length appear;
The whole at once is bold and regular.

Whoever thinks a faultless piece to see,
Thinks what ne'er was, nor is, nor e'er shall be.
In ev'ry work regard the writer's end, 55
Since none can compass more than they intend;
And if the means be just, the conduct true,
Applause, in spite of trivial faults, is due.
As men of breeding, sometimes men of wit,
T' avoid great errors, must the less commit; 60
Neglect the rules each verbal critic lays,
For not to know some trifles is a praise.
Most critics, fond of some subservient art,
Still make the whole depend upon a part:
They talk of principles, but notions prize, 65
And all to one lov'd folly sacrifice.

Once on a time La Mancha's knight, they say,
A certain bard encountering on the way,
Discours'd in terms as just, with looks as sage,
As e'er could Dennis of the Grecian stage, 70
Concluding all were desperate sots and fools
Who durst depart from Aristotle's rules.
Our author, happy in a judge so nice,
Produc'd his play, and begg'd the knight's advice;
Made him observe the subject and the plot, 75
The manners, passions, unities; what not?
All which exact to rule were brought about,
Were but a combat in the lists left out.
"What! leave the combat out?" exclaims the knight.
"Yes, or we must renounce the Stagirite." 80
"Not so, by Heav'n! (he answers in a rage)
Knights, squires, and steeds, must enter on the
stage."---

"So vast a throng the stage can ne'er contain."---
"Then build a new, or act it on a plain."

Thus critics of less judgment than caprice, 85
 Curious, not knowing, not exact, but nice,
 Form short ideas, and offend in arts
 (As most in manners) by a love to parts.

Some to conceit alone their taste confine,
 And glittering thoughts struck out at every line; 90
 Pleas'd with a work where nothing's just or fit,
 One glaring chaos and wild heap of wit.
 Poets, like painters, thus unskill'd to trace
 The naked nature and the living grace,
 With gold and jewels cover every part, 95
 And hide with ornaments their want of art.
 True wit is nature to advantage dress'd,
 What oft was thought, but ne'er so well express'd;
 Something whose truth convinc'd at sight we find,
 That gives us back the image of our mind. 100
 As shades more sweetly recommend the light,
 So modest plainness sets off sprightly wit:
 For works may have more wit than does 'em good,
 As bodies perish through excess of blood.

Others for language all their care express, 105
 And value books as women men, for dress;
 Their praise is still—the style is excellent;
 The sense they humbly take upon content,
 Words are like leaves; and where they most abound,
 Much fruit of sense beneath is rarely found. 110
 False eloquence, like the prismatic glass,
 Its gaudy colours spreads on ev'ry place;
 The face of nature we no more survey,
 All glares alike, without distinction gay;
 But true expression, like th' unchanging sun, 115
 Clears and improves whate'er it shines upon;
 It gilds all objects, but it alters none.
 Expression is the dress of thought, and still
 Appears more decent as more suitable.

A vile conceit in pompous words express'd, 120
 Is like a clown in regal purple dress'd:
 For different styles with different subjects sort,
 As several garbs with country, town, and court.

Some by old words to fame have made pretence,
 Ancients in phrase, mere moderns in their sense:
 Such labour'd nothings in so strange a style 126
 Amaze th' unlearn'd, and make the learned smile.
 Unlucky as Fungoso in the play,
 These sparks with awkward vanity display
 What the fine gentleman wore yesterday; 130 }
 And but so mimic ancient wits at best,
 As apes our grandsires in their doublets drest.
 In words as fashions the same rule will hold,
 Alike fantastic if too new or old:
 Be not the first by whom the new are tried, 135
 Nor yet the last to lay the old aside.

But most by numbers judge a poet's song,
 And smooth or rough with them is right or wrong:
 In the bright Muse though thousand charms conspire,
 Her voice is all these tuneful fools admire, 140
 Who haunt Parnassus but to please their ear,
 Not mend their minds, as some to church repair }
 Not for the doctrine but the music there.
 These equal syllables alone require,
 Tho' oft the ear the open vowels tire, 145
 While expletives their feeble aid do join,
 And ten low words oft creep in one dull line:
 While they ring round the same unvaried chimes,
 With sure returns of still expected rhymes;
 Where'er you find "the cooling western breeze," 150
 In the next line, it "whispers through the trees:"
 If chrystal streams "with pleasing murmurs creep,"
 The reader's threatened (not in vain) with "sleep:"
 Then, at the last and only couplet fraught
 With some unmeaning thing they call a thought, 155
 A needless Alexandrine ends the song,
 That like a wounded snake drags its slow length along,
 Leave such to tune their own dull rhymes, and know
 What's roundly smooth, or languishingly slow,
 And praise the easy vigour of a line 160
 Where Denham's strength and Waller's sweetness join.
 True ease in writing comes from art, not chance,
 As those move easiest who have learn'd to dance.

'Tis not enough no harshness gives offence;
 The sound must seem an echo to the sense. 165
 Soft is the strain when Zephyr gently blows,
 And the smooth stream in smoother numbers flows;
 But when loud surges lash the sounding shore,
 The hoarse rough verse should like the torrent roar.
 When Ajax strives some rock's vast weight to throw,
 The line too labours, and the words move slow: 171
 Not so when swift Camilla scours the plain,
 Flies o'er th' unbending corn, and skims along the
 Hear how Timotheus' varied lays surprise, [main.
 And bid alternate passions fall and rise, 175
 While at each change the son of Lybian Jove
 Now burns with glory, and then melts with love:
 Now his fierce eyes with sparkling fury glow,
 Now sighs steal out, and tears begin to flow:
 Persians and Greeks like turns of Nature found, 180
 And the world's victor stood subdued by sound!
 The pow'r of music all our hearts allow,
 And what Timotheus was is Dryden now.

Avoid extremes, and shun the fault of such
 Who still are pleas'd too little or too much. 185
 At ev'ry trifle scorn to take offence;
 That always shews great pride or little sense:
 Those heads, as stomachs, are not sure the best
 Which nauseate all, and nothing can digest.
 Yet let not each gay turn thy rapture move; 190
 For fools admire, but men of sense approve.
 As things seem large which we through mists descry,
 Dulness is ever apt to magnify.

Some foreign writers, some our own despise;
 The ancients only, or the moderns prize. 195
 Thus wit, like faith, by each man is applied
 To one small sect, and all are damn'd beside.
 Meanly they seek the blessing to confine,
 And force that sun but on a part to shine,
 Which not alone the southern wit sublimes, 200
 But ripens spirits in cold northern climes;
 Which from the first has shone on ages past,
 Enlights the present, and shall warm the last;

Though each may feel increases and decays,
And see now clearer and now darker days: 205
Regard not then if wit be old or new,
But blame the false, and value still the true.

Some ne'er advance a judgment of their own,
But catch the spreading notion of the town;
They reason and conclude by precedent, 210
And own stale nonsense which they ne'er invent.
Some judge of authors' names, not works, and then
Nor praise nor blame the writings, but the men.
Of all this servile herd the worst is he
That in proud dulness joins with quality; 215

A constant critic at the great man's board,
To fetch and carry nonsense for my lord.
What woeful stuff this madrigal would be
In some starv'd hackney sonneteer or me!
But let a lord once own the happy lines, 220
How the wit brightens! how the style refines!
Before his sacred name flies every fault,
And each exalted stanza teems with thought!

The vulgar thus through imitation err,
As oft the learn'd by being singular; 225
So much they scorn the crowd, that if the throng
By chance go right, they purposely go wrong.
So schismatics the plain believers quit,
And are but damn'd for having too much wit.
Some praise at morning what they blame at night,
But always think the last opinion right. 231

A Muse by these is like a mistress us'd,
'This hour she's idoliz'd, the next abus'd;
While their weak heads, like towns unfortified,
'Twixt sense and nonsense daily change their side.
Ask them the cause; they're wiser still they say;
And still to-morrow's wiser than to-day.
We think our fathers fools, so wise we grow;
Our wiser sons no doubt will think us so.
Once school-divines this zealous isle o'erspread; 240
Who knew most sentences was deepest read:
Faith, gospel, all seem'd made to be disputed,
And none had sense enough to be confuted.

Scotists and Thomists now in peace remain,
 Amidst their kindred cobwebs in Duck Lane. 245
 If faith itself has different dresses worn,
 What wonder modes in wit should take their turn!
 Oft leaving what is natural and fit,
 The current folly proves the ready wit;
 And authors think their reputation safe 250
 Which lives as long as fools are pleas'd to laugh.

Some, valuing those of their own side or mind,
 Still make themselves the measure of mankind:
 Fondly we think we honour merit then,
 When we but praise ourselves in other men. 255
 Parties in wit attend on those of state,
 And public faction doubles private hate.
 Pride, malice, folly, against Dryden rose
 In various shapes of parsons, critics, beaux;
 But sense surviv'd when merry jests were past; 260
 For rising merit will buoy up at last.

Might he return and bless once more our eyes,
 New Blackmores and new Milbourns must arise:
 Nay, should great Homer lift his awful head,
 Zoilus again would start up from the dead. 265

Envy will merit as its shade pursue,
 But like a shadow proves the substance true;
 For envied wit, like Sol eclips'd, makes known
 Th' opposing body's grossness, not its own.
 When first that sun too powerful beams displays,
 It draws up vapours which obscure its rays; 271
 But ev'n those clouds at last adorn its way,
 Reflect new glories, and augment the day.

Be thou the first true merit to befriend;
 His praise is lost who stays till all commend. 275
 Short is the date, alas! of modern rhymes,
 And 'tis but just to let them live betimes.
 No longer now that golden age appears
 When patriarch wits surviv'd a thousand years:
 Now length of fame (our second life) is lost, 280
 And bare threescore is all ev'n that can boast:
 Our sons their fathers' failing language see,
 And such as Chaucer is shall Dryden be.

So when the faithful pencil has design'd
Some bright idea of the master's mind, 285
Where a new world leaps out at his command,
And ready Nature waits upon his hand;
When the ripe colours soften and unite,
And sweetly melt into just shade and light;
When mellowing years their full perfection give, 290
And each bold figure just begins to live,
The treacherous colours the fair art betray,
And all the bright creation fades away!

Unhappy wit, like most mistaken things,
Atones not for that envy which it brings: 295
In youth alone its empty praise we boast,
But soon the short liv'd vanity is lost;
Like some fair flow'r the early spring supplies,
That gaily blooms, but ev'n in blooming dies.
What is this wit which must our cares employ? 300
The owner's wife that other men enjoy;
Then most our trouble still when most admir'd,
And still the more we give the more requir'd;
Whose fame with pains we guard, but lose with
ease,

Sure some to vex, but never all to please; 305
'Tis what the vicious fear, the virtuous shun;
By fools 'tis hated, and by knaves undone!

If wit so much from ignorance undergo,
Ah! let not learning too commence its foe.
Of old those met rewards who could excel, 310
And such were prais'd who but endeavour'd well:
Though triumphs were to generals only due,
Crowns wese reserv'd to grace the soldiers too.
Now they who reach Parnassus' lofty crown
Employ their pains to spurn some others down; 315
And while self-love each jealous writer rules,
Contending wits become the sport of fools:
But still the worst with most regret commend,
For each ill author is as bad a friend.

To what base ends and by what abject ways 320
Are mortals urg'd through sacred lust of praise!

Ah! ne'er so dire a thirst of glory boast,
 Nor in the critic let the man be lost.
 Good nature and good sense must ever join;
 To err is human, to forgive divine. 325

But if in noble minds some dregs remain,
 Not yet purg'd off, of spleen and sour disdain,
 Discharge that rage on more provoking crimes,
 Nor fear a dearth in these flagitious times.

No pardon vile obscenity should find, 330
 Though wit and art conspire to move your mind;
 But dulness with obscenity must prove
 As shameful sure as impotence in love.

In the fat age of pleasure, wealth, and ease,
 Sprung the rank weed, and thriv'd with large increase:
 When love was all an easy monarch's care, 336

Seldom at council, never in a war;
 Jilts rul'd the state, and statesmen farces writ;
 Nay wits had pensions, and young lords had wit;
 The fair sat panting at a courtier's play, 340

And not a mask went unimprov'd away;
 The modest fan was lifted up no more,
 And virgins smiled at what they blush'd before.

The following licence of a foreign reign
 Did all the dregs of bold Socinus drain; 345

Then unbelieving priests reform'd the nation,
 And taught more pleasant methods of salvation;
 Where Heav'n's free subjects might their rights dis-
 pute,

Lest God himself should seem too absolute:
 Pulpits their sacred satire learn'd to spare, 350
 And Vice admir'd to find a flatterer there!

Encourag'd thus, Wit's Titans brav'd the skies,
 And the press groan'd with licens'd blasphemies.
 These monsters, Critics! with your darts engage,
 Here point your thunder, and exhaust your rage!
 Yet shun their fault, who, scandalously nice, 356

Will needs mistake an author into vice:
 All seems infected that th' infected spy,
 As all looks yellow to the jaundic'd eye.

PART III.

Rules for the conduct of manners in a critic. Candour, *v.* 4. Modesty, *v.* 7. Good-breeding, *v.* 13. Sincerity and freedom of advice, *v.* 19. When one's counsel is to be restrained, *v.* 25. Character of an incorrigible poet, *v.* 41; and of an impertinent critic, *v.* 51, &c. Character of a good critic, *v.* 72. The history of criticism, and characters of the best critics. Aristotle, *v.* 86. Horace, *v.* 94. Dionysius, *v.* 106. Petronius, *v.* 108. Quintilian, *v.* 110. Longinus, *v.* 116. Of the decay of criticism, and its revival. Erasmus, *v.* 134. Vida, *v.* 146. Boileau, *v.* 155. Lord Roscommon, &c. *v.* 166. Conclusion.

LEARN then what morals critics ought to show,
For 'tis but half a judge's task to know.
'Tis not enough taste, judgment, learning join;
In all you speak let truth and candour shine;
That not alone what to your sense is due 5
All may allow, but seek your friendship too.

Be silent always when you doubt your sense,
And speak, though sure, with seeming diffidence:
Some positive persisting fops we know,
Who if once wrong will needs be always so; 10
But you with pleasure own your errors past,
And make each day a critique on the last.

'Tis not enough your counsel still be true;
Blunt truths more mischief than nice falsehoods do:
Men must be taught as if you taught them not, 15
And things unknown propos'd as things forgot.
Without good-breeding truth is disapprov'd;
That only makes superior sense belov'd.

Be niggards of advice on no pretence,
For the worst avarice is that of sense. 20
With mean complacence ne'er betray your trust,
Nor be so civil as to prove unjust.

Fear not the anger of the wise to raise:
Those best can bear reproof who merit praise.

'Twere well might critics still this freedom take,
But Appius reddens at each word you speak, 26
And stares tremendous, with a threatening eye,
Like some fierce tyrant in old tapestry,

Fear most to tax an honourable fool,
 Whose right it is, uncensur'd, to be dull: 30
 Such, without wit, are poets when they please,
 As without learning they can take degrees.
 Leave dangerous truths to unsuccessful satires,
 And flattery to fulsome dedicators,
 Whom, when they praise, the world believes no more
 Than when they promise to give scribbling o'er. 36
 'Tis best sometimes your censure to restrain,
 And charitably let the dull be vain:
 Your silence there is better than your spite,
 For who can rail so long as they can write? 40
 Still humming on their drowsy course they keep,
 And lash'd so long, like tops are lash'd asleep.
 False steps but help them to renew their race,
 As after stumbling jades will mend their pace.
 What crowds of these, impenitently bold, 45
 In sounds and jingling syllables grown old,
 Still run on poets in a raging vein,
 Ev'n to the dregs and squeezings of the brain,
 Strain out the last dull droppings of their sense,
 And rhyme with all the rage of impotence! 50
 Such shameless bards we have; and yet 'tis true
 There are as mad abandon'd critics too.
 The bookful blockhead, ignorantly read,
 With loads of learned lumber in his head,
 With his own tongue still edifies his ears, 55
 And always listening to himself appears:
 All books he reads, and all he reads assails,
 From Dryden's Fables down to Durfey's Tales.
 With him most authors steal their works or buy;
 Garth did not write his own Dispensary. 60
 Name a new play, and he's the poet's friend;
 Nay, show'd his faults---but when would poets mend?
 No place so sacred from such fops is barr'd,
 Nor is Paul's Church more safe than Paul's Church-
 yard:
 Nay, fly to altars, there they'll talk you dead; 65
 For fools rush in where angels fear to tread.

Distrustful sense with modest caution speaks,
It still looks home, and short excursions makes;
But rattling nonsense in full vollies breaks,
And never shock'd, and never turn'd aside,
Bursts out, resistless, with a thundering tide. 70

But where's the man who counsel can bestow,
Still pleas'd to teach, and yet not proud to know;
Unbiass'd or by favour or by spite,
Not dully prepossess'd, nor blindly right; 75
Tho' learn'd well-bred, and tho' well-bred sincere;
Modestly bold, and humanely severe;
Who to a friend his faults can freely show,
And gladly praise the merit of a foe;
Bless'd with a taste exact, yet unconfin'd, 80
A knowledge both of books and human kind;
Generous converse; a soul exempt from pride;
And love to praise, with reason on his side?

Such once were Critics; such the happy few
Athens and Rome in better ages knew. 85
The mighty Stagirite first left the shore,
Spread all his sails, and durst the deeps explore;
He steer'd securely, and discover'd far,
Led by the light of the Mæonian star.
Poets, a race long uncounfin'd and free, 90
Still fond and proud of savage liberty,
Receiv'd his laws, and stood convinc'd 'twas fit,
Who conquer'd nature should preside o'er wit.

Horace still charms with graceful negligence,
And without method talks us into sense; 95
Will, like a friend, familiarly convey
The truest notions in the easiest way.
He who, supreme in judgment as in wit,
Might boldly censure as he boldly writ,
Yet judg'd with coolness, though he sung with fire:
His precepts teach but what his works inspire. 101
Our critics take a contrary extreme,
They judge with fury, but they write with phlegm:
Nor suffers Horace more in wrong translations
By wits, than critics in as wrong quotations. 105

See Dionysius Homer's thoughts refine,
And call new beauties forth from ev'ry line!

Fancy and art in gay Petronius please :
The scholar's learning with the courtier's ease.

In grave Quintilian's copious work we find 110
The justest rules and clearest method join'd.

Thus useful arms in magazines we place,
All rang'd in order, and dispos'd with grace;
But less to please the eye than arm the hand,
Still fit for use, and ready at command. 115

Thee, bold Longinus! all the Nine inspire,
And bless their critic with a poet's fire:
An ardent judge, who, zealous in his trust,
With warmth gives sentence, yet is always just;
Whose own example strengthens all his laws, 120
And is himself that great Sublime he draws.

Thus long succeeding critics justly reign'd,
Licence repress'd, and useful laws ordain'd:
Learning and Rome alike in empire grew,
And arts still followed where her eagles flew; 125
From the same foes at last both felt their doom,
And the same age saw Learning fall and Rome.
With Tyranny then Superstition join'd,
As that the body, this enslav'd the mind;
Much was believ'd, but little understood, 130
And to be dull was construed to be good:
A second deluge learning thus o'er-ran,
And the Monks finish'd what the Goths began.

At length Erasmus, that great injur'd name,
(The glory of the priesthood, and the shame!) 135
Stemm'd the wild torrent of a barbarous age,
And drove those holy Vandals off the stage.

But see! each Muse in Leo's golden days
Starts from her trance, and trims her wither'd bays;
Rome's ancient Genius, o'er its ruins spread, 140
Shakes off the dust, and rears his reverend head.
Then Sculpture and her sister arts revive;
Stones leap'd to form, and rocks began to live;
With sweeter notes each rising temple rung;
A Raphael painted, and a Vida sung: 145

Immortal Vida! on whose honour'd brow
 The poet's bays and critic's ivy grow!
 Cremona now shall ever boast thy name,
 As next in place to Mantua, next in fame!

But soon by impious arms from Latium chas'd, 150
 Their ancient bounds the banish'd Muses pass'd:
 Thence arts o'er all the northern world advance,
 But critic learning flourish'd most in France:
 The rules a nation born to serve obeys,
 And Boileau still in right of Horace sways. 155

But we, brave Britons, foreign laws despis'd,
 And kept unconquer'd and unciviliz'd;
 Fierce for the liberties of wit, and bold,
 We still defied the Romans, as of old.
 Yet some there were, among the sounder few, 160
 Of those who less presum'd and better knew,
 Who durst assert the juster ancient cause,
 And here restor'd wit's fundamental laws.

Such was the Muse whose rules and practice tell
 "Nature's chief master-piece is writing well." 165
 Such was Roscommon, not more learn'd than good,
 With manners generous as his noble blood;
 To him the wit of Greece and Rome was known,
 And ev'ry author's merit but his own.

Such late was Walsh---the Muse's judge and friend,
 Who justly knew to blame or to commend; 171
 To failings mild, but zealous for desert;
 The clearest head, and the sincerest heart.

This humble praise, lamented shade! receive;
 This praise at least a grateful Muse may give: 175

The Muse whose early voice you taught to sing,
 Prescrib'd her heights, and prun'd her tender wing,
 (Her guide now lost) no more attempts to rise,
 But in low numbers short excursions tries;
 Content if hence th' unlearn'd their wants may view,
 The learn'd reflect on what before they knew: 181

Careless of censure, nor too fond of fame;
 Still pleas'd to praise, yet not afraid to blame;
 Averse alike to flatter or offend;
 Not free from faults, nor yet too vain to mend. 185

AN
ESSAY ON MAN.

IN FOUR EPISTLES TO LORD BOLINGBROKE.

THE DESIGN.

HAVING proposed to write some pieces on human life and manners, such as (to use my Lord Bacon's expression) "come home to men's business and bosoms," I thought it more satisfactory to begin with considering man in the abstract, his nature and his state; since to prove any moral duty, to enforce any moral precept, or to examine the perfection or imperfection of any creature whatsoever, it is necessary first to know what condition and relation it is placed in, and what is the proper end and purpose of its being.

The science of human nature is, like all other sciences, reduced to a few clear points: there are not many certain truths in this world. It is therefore in the anatomy of the mind as in that of the body; more good will accrue to mankind by attending to the large, open, and perceptible parts, than by studying too much such finer nerves and vessels, the conformations and uses of which will for ever escape our observation. The disputes are all upon these last; and, I will venture to say, they have less sharpened the wits than the hearts of men against each other, and have diminished the practice more than advanced the theory of morality. If I could flatter myself that this Essay has any merit, it is in steering betwixt the extremes of doctrines seemingly opposite, in passing over terms utterly unintelligible, and in forming a temperate, yet not inconsistent, and a short, yet not imperfect, system of Ethics.

This I might have done in prose; but I chose verse, and even rhyme, for two reasons. The one will appear obvious; that principles, maxims, or precepts, so written, both strike the reader more strongly at first, and are more easily retained by him afterwards: the other may seem odd, but it is true; I found I could express them more shortly this way than in prose itself; and nothing is more certain, than that much of the force as well as grace of arguments or instructions depends on their conciseness. I was unable to treat this part of my subject more in detail without becoming dry and tedious; or more poetically, without sacrificing perspicuity to ornament, without wandering from the precision, or breaking the chain of reasoning. If any man can unite all these without diminution of any of them, I freely confess he will compass a thing above my capacity.

What is now published is only to be considered as a general Map of Man, marking out no more than the greater parts, their extent, their limits, and their connection, but leaving the particular to be more fully delineated in the charts which are to follow; consequently these Epistles in their progress (if I have health and leisure to make any progress) will be less dry, and more susceptible of poetical ornament. I am here only opening the fountains, and clearing the passage: to deduce the rivers, to follow them in their course, and to observe their effects, may be a task more agreeable.



ESSAY ON MAN.

EPISTLE I.

OF THE NATURE AND STATE OF MAN WITH
RESPECT TO THE UNIVERSE.

ARGUMENT.

Of Man in the abstract. I. That we can judge only with regard to our own system, being ignorant of the relations of systems and things, v. 17, &c. II. That man is not to be deemed imperfect, but a being suited to his place and rank in the creation, agreeable to the general order of things, and conformable to ends and relations to him unknown, v. 35, &c. III. That it is partly upon his ignorance of future events, and partly upon the hope of a future state, that all his happiness in the present depends, v. 77, &c. IV. The pride of aiming at more knowledge, and pretending to more perfection, the cause of man's error and misery. The impiety of putting himself in the place of God, and judging of the fitness or unfitness, perfection or imperfection, justice or injustice, of his dispensations, v. 113, &c. V. The absurdity of conceiving himself the final cause of the creation, or expecting that perfection in the moral world which is not in the natural, v. 131, &c. VI. The unreasonableness of his complaints against Providence, while, on the one hand, he demands the perfections of the angels, and, on the other, the bodily qualifications of the brutes; though to possess any of the sensitive faculties in a higher degree, would render him miserable, v. 173, &c. VII. That throughout the whole visible world an universal order and gradation in the sensual and mental faculties is observed, which causes a subordination of creature to creature, and of all creatures to man. The gradations of sense, instinct, thought, reflection, reason; that reason alone countervails all the other faculties, v. 207. VIII. How much further this order and subordination of living creatures may extend above and below us; were any part of which broken, not that part only, but the whole connected creation must be destroyed, v. 233. IX. The extravagance, madness, and pride, of such a desire, v. 259. X. The consequence of all, the absolute submission due to Providence, both as to our present and future state, v. 281, &c. to the end.

AWAKE, my St. John! leave all meaner things
To low ambition and the pride of kings.
Let us (since life can little more supply
Than just to look about us and to die)
Expatriate free o'er all this scene of man; 5
A mighty maze! but not without a plan:
A wild where weeds and flow'rs promiscuous shoot,
Or garden tempting with forbidden fruit.
Together let us beat this ample field,
Try what the open, what the covert yield; 10
The latent tracts, the giddy heights, explore
Of all who blindly creep or sightless soar;
Eye Nature's walks, shoot folly as it flies,
And catch the manners living as they rise;
Laugh where we must, be candid where we can, 15
But vindicate the ways of God to man.

I. Say first, of God above or man below,
 What can we reason but from what we know?
 Of man what see we but his station here,
 From which to reason or to which refer? 20
 Through worlds unnumber'd tho' the God be known,
 'Tis ours to trace him only in our own.
 He who through vast immensity can pierce,
 See worlds on worlds compose one universe,
 Observe how system into system runs, 25
 What other planets circle other suns,
 What vary'd being peoples every star,
 May tell why Heav'n has made us as we are:
 But of this frame, the bearings and the ties,
 The strong connections, nice dependencies, 30
 Gradations just, has thy pervading soul,
 Look'd through? or can a part contain the whole?

Is the great chain that draws all to agree,
 And drawn supports, upheld by God or thee? 34

II. Presumptuous man! the reason wouldst thou
 Why form'd so weak, so little, and so blind! [find
 First, if thou canst, the harder reason guess,
 Why form'd no weaker, blinder, and no less?
 Ask of thy mother earth why oaks are made
 Taller or stronger than the weeds they shade? 40
 Or ask of yonder argent fields above,
 Why Jove's satellites are less than Jove?

Of systems possible, if 'tis confest,
 That wisdom infinite must form the best,
 Where all must full or not coherent be, 45
 And all that rises rise in due degree;
 Then in the scale of reasoning life 'tis plain,
 There must be, somewhere, such a rank as man;
 And all the question (wrangle e'er so long)
 Is only this—If God has plac'd him wrong? 50

Respecting man, whatever wrong we call;
 May, must be right, as relative to all.
 In human works, though labour'd on with pain,
 A thousand movements scarce one purpose gain:
 In God's one single can its end produce, 55
 Yet serves to second too some other use:

So man, who here seems principal alone,
 Perhaps acts second to some sphere unknown;
 Touches some wheel, or verges to some goal:
 'Tis but a part we see, and not a whole. 60
 When the proud steed shall know why man restrains
 His fiery course, or drives him o'er the plains;
 When the dull ox, why now he breaks the clod,
 Is now a victim, and now Egypt's god;
 Then shall man's pride and dulness comprehend 65
 His actions', passions', being's, use and end:
 Why doing, suffering, check'd, impell'd; and why
 This hour a slave, the next a deity.

Then say not man's imperfect, Heav'n in fault;
 Say rather man's as perfect as he ought; 70
 His knowledge measur'd to his state and place,
 His time a moment, and a point his space.
 If to be perfect in a certain sphere,
 What matter soon or late, or here or there?
 The bless'd to-day is as completely so 75
 As who began a thousand years ago. [fate,

III. Heav'n from all creatures hides the book of
 All but the page prescrib'd, their present state:
 From brutes what men, from men what spirits know;
 Or who could suffer being here below? 80
 The lamb thy riot dooms to bleed to-day,
 Had he thy reason would he skip and play?
 Pleas'd to the last, he crops the flow'ry food.
 And licks the hand just rais'd to shed his blood.
 Oh! blindness to the future! kindly giv'n, 85
 That each may fill the circle mark'd by Heav'n;
 Who sees with equal eye, as God of all,
 A hero perish or a sparrow fall,
 Atoms or systems into ruin hurl'd,
 And now a bubble burst, and now a world. 90

Hope humbly then, with trembling pinions soar,
 Wait the great teacher Death, and God adore.
 What future bliss he gives not thee to know,
 But gives that hope to be thy blessing now.
 Hope springs eternal in the human breast: 95
 Man never is but always to be blest.

The soul, uneasy and confin'd from home,
Rests and expatiates in a life to come.

Lo, the poor Indian! whose untutor'd mind
Sees God in clouds, or hears him in the wind; 100
His soul proud science never taught to stray
Far as the solar walk or milky way;
Yet simple nature to his hope has giv'n,
Behind the cloud-topp'd hill, an humbler heav'n;
Some safer world in depth of woods embrac'd, 105
Some happier island in the wat'ry waste,
Where slaves once more their native land behold,
No fiends torment, no Christians thirst for gold.
To be content's his natural desire;
He asks no angels wing, no seraph's fire; 110
But thinks, admitted to that equal sky,
His faithful dog shall bear him company.

IV. Go, wiser thou! and in thy scale of sense
Weigh thy opinion against Providence;
Call imperfection what thou fancy'st such; 115
Say here he gives too little, there too much;
Destroy all creatures for thy sport or gust,
Yet cry, if man's unhappy, God's unjust;
If man alone engross not Heav'n's high care,
Alone made perfect here, immortal there; 120
Snatch from his hand the balance and the rod,
Rejudge his justice, be the god of God.
In pride, in reasoning pride, our error lies;
All quit their sphere, and rush into the skies.
Pride still is aiming at the bless'd abodes, 125
Men would be angels, angels would be gods.
Aspiring to be gods if angels fell,
Aspiring to be angels men rebel:
And who but wishes to invert the laws
Of order, sins against th' Eternal Cause. 130

V. Ask for what end the heav'nly bodies shine,
Earth for whose use?---Pride answers, "'Tis for mine:
For me kind Nature wakes her genial pow'r,
Suckles each herb and spreads out ev'ry flow'r;
Annual for me the grape, the rose, renew 135
The juice nectareous and the balmy dew;

For me the mine a thousand treasures brings;
 For me health gushes from a thousand springs;
 Seas roll to waft me, suns to light me rise;
 My footstool earth, my canopy the skies." 140

But errs not Nature from this gracious end,
 From burning suns when livid deaths descend,
 When earthquakes swallow, or when tempests sweep
 Towns to one grave, whole nations to the deep?

"No, ('tis replied) the first Almighty Cause 145

Acts not by partial but by general laws;
 Th' exceptions few; some change since all began;
 And what created perfect?"---Why then man?

If the great end be human happiness,
 Then Nature deviates; and can man do less? 150

As much that end a constant course requires
 Of showers and sunshine as of man's desires;
 As much eternal springs and cloudless skies,
 As men for ever temperate, calm, and wise.

If plagues or earthquakes break not Heav'n's design,
 Why then a Borgia or a Cataline! 156

Who knows but he, whose hand the lightning forms,
 Who heaves old ocean, and who wings the storms,
 Pours fierce ambition in a Cæsar's mind,

Or turns young Ammon loose to scourge mankind?
 From pride, from pride, our very reasoning springs;
 Account for moral as for natural things:

Why charge we Heav'n in those, in these acquit?
 In both to reason right, is to submit.

Better for us, perhaps, it might appear, 165

Were there all harmony, all virtue here;

That never air or ocean felt the wind,

That never passion discompos'd the mind:

But all subsists by elemental strife;

And passions are the elements of life. 170

The general order, since the whole began,

Is kept in nature, and is kept in man.

VI. What would this man? Now upward will he

And little less than angel, would be more; [soar,

Now looking downwards, just as griev'd appears

To want the strength of bulls, the fur of bears. 176

Made for his use all creatures if he call,
 Say what their use had he the pow'rs of all?
 Nature to these without profusion kind,
 The proper organs, proper pow'rs assign'd; 180
 Each seeming want compensated of course,
 Here with degrees of swiftness, there of force;
 All in exact proportion to their state;
 Nothing to add, and nothing to abate.

Each beast, each insect, happy in its own: 185
 Is Heav'n unkind to man, and man alone?
 Shall he alone, whom rational we call,
 Be pleas'd with nothing, if not bless'd with all?

The bliss of man (could pride that blessing find,) 190
 Is not to act or think beyond mankind;
 No pow'rs of body or of soul to share,
 But what his nature and his state can bear.

Why has not man a microscopic eye?
 For this plain reason, man is not a fly.
 Say what the use were finer optics giv'n, 195
 T' inspect a mite, not comprehend the heav'n?
 Or touch, if tremblingly alive all o'er,
 To smart and agonize at every pore?

Or quick effluvia darting through the brain,
 Die of a rose in aromatic pain? 200

If Nature thunder'd in his opening ears,
 And stunn'd him with the music of the spheres,
 How would he wish that Heav'n had left him still
 The whispering zephyr and the purling rill?
 Who finds not Providence all good and wise, 205
 Alike in what it gives and what denies!

VII. Far as creation's ample range extends,
 The scale of sensual, mental, pow'rs ascends:
 Mark how it mounts to man's imperial race,
 From the green myriads in the peopled grass: 210
 What mode's of sight betwixt each wide extreme,
 The mole's dim curtain and the lynx's beam!
 Of smell, the headlong lioness between
 And hound sagacious on the tainted green!
 Of hearing, from the life that fills the flood 215
 To that which warbles through the vernal wood!

The spider's touch how exquisitely fine!
 Feels at each thread, and lives along the line:
 In the nice bee what sense so subtly true,
 From poisonous herbs extracts the healing dew! 220
 How instinct varies in the groveling swine
 Compar'd, half-reasoning elephant, with thine!
 'Twixt that and reason what a nice barrier!
 For ever separate, yet for ever near!
 Remembrance and reflection how allied! 225
 What thin partitions sense from thought divide!
 And middle natures how they long to join,
 Yet never pass th' insuperable line!
 Without this just gradation could they be
 Subjected these to those, or all to thee? 230
 The pow'rs of all subdued by these alone,
 Is not thy reason all these pow'rs in one?

VIII. See thro' this air, this ocean, and this earth,
 All matter quick, and bursting into birth.
 Above, how high progressive life may go! 235
 Around, how wide! how deep extend below!
 Vast chain of being! which from God began
 Natures ethereal, human, angel, man,
 Beast, bird, fish, insect, what no eye can see,
 No glass can reach; from infinite to thee; 240
 From thee to nothing.--On superior pow'rs
 Were we to press, inferior might on ours;
 Or in the full creation leave a void,
 Where, one step broken, the great scale's destroy'd:
 From Nature's chain whatever link you strike, 245
 Tenth, or ten thousandth, breaks the chain alike.

And if each system in gradation roll
 Alike essential to th' amazing whole,
 The least confusion but in one, not all
 That system only, but the whole must fall. 250
 Let earth unbalanc'd from her orbit fly,
 Planets and suns run lawless through the sky;
 Let ruling angels from their spheres be hurl'd,
 Being on being wreck'd, and world on world;
 Heav'ns whole foundations to their centre nod, 255
 And Nature tremble to the throne of God:

All this dread order break—for whom? for thee?
Vile worm!—Oh, madness! pride! impiety!

IX. What if the foot, ordain'd the dust to tread,
Or hand to toil, aspir'd to be the head? 260

What if the head, the eye, or ear repin'd
To serve mere engines to the ruling mind?

Just as absurd for any part to claim

To be another in this general frame;

Just as absurd to mourn the tasks or pains 265

The great directing Mind of All ordains.

All are but parts of one stupendous whole,

Whose body Nature is, and God the soul;

That chang'd through all, and yet in all the same,

Great in the earth as in th' ethereal frame, 270

Warms in the sun, refreshes in the breeze,

Glow in the stars, and blossoms in the trees;

Lives through all life, extends through all extent,

Spreads undivided, operates unspent;

Breathes in our soul, informs our mortal part, 275

As full, as perfect, in a hair as heart;

As full, as perfect, in vile man that mourns,

As the rapt seraph that adores and burns:

To him no high, no low, no great, no small;

He fills, he bounds, connects, and equals all. 280

X. Cease then, nor order imperfection name;

Our proper bliss depends on what we blame,

Know thy own point: this kind, this due degree

Of blindness, weakness, Heav'n bestows on thee.

Submit—In this or any other sphere, 285

Secure to be as bless'd as thou canst bear;

Safe in the hand of one disposing Pow'r,

Or in the natal or the mortal hour,

All nature is but art unknown to thee;

All chance, direction which thou canst not see; 290

All discord, harmony not understood;

All partial evil, universal good:

And spite of pride, in erring reason's spite,

One truth is clear—*Whatever is is right.* 294

EPISTLE II.

OF THE NATURE AND STATE OF MAN WITH RESPECT
TO HIMSELF AS AN INDIVIDUAL.

ARGUMENT.

I. The business of man not to pry into God, but to study himself; his middle nature; his powers and frailties, v. 1---18. The limits of his capacity, v. 19, &c. II. The two principles of man, self-love and reason, both necessary, v. 53, &c. Self-love the stronger, and why, v. 67, &c. Their end the same, v. 81, &c. III. The passions and their use, v. 93---130. The predominant passion, and its force,, v. 132---160. Its necessity in directing men to different purposes, v. 165, &c. Its providential use in fixing our principle, and ascertaining our virtue, v. 177. IV. Virtue and vice joined in our mixed nature; the limits near, yet the things separate and evident: what is the office of reason, v. 203---216. V. How odious vice in itself, and how we deceive ourselves into it, v. 217. That, however, the ends of Providence and general good are answered in our passions and imperfections, v. 238, &c. How usefully these are distributed to all orders of men, v. 241. How useful they are to society, v. 251; and to individuals,, v. 263; in every state, and every age of life, v. 273, &c.

I. Know then thyself, presume not God to scan;
The proper study of mankind is man.
Plac'd on this isthmus of a middle state,
A being darkly wise and rudely great;
With too much knowledge for the Sceptic side, 5
With too much weakness for the Stoic's pride,
He hangs between, in doubt to act or rest;
In doubt to deem himself a god or beast;
In doubt his mind or body to prefer;
Born but to die, and reasoning but to err; 10
Alike in ignorance, his reason such,
Whether he thinks too little or too much:
Chaos of thought and passion, all confus'd;
Still by himself abus'd or disabus'd;
Created half to rise and half to fall; 15
Great lord of all things, yet a prey to all;
Sole judge of truth, in endless error hurl'd;
The glory, jest, and riddle of the world!
Go, wond'rous creature! mount where science
guides;
Go, measure earth, weigh air, and state the tides; 20
Instruct the planets in what orbs to run,
Correct old Time, and regulate the sun;

Go soar with Plato to th' empyreal sphere,
 To the first good, first perfect, and first fair;
 Or tread the mazy round his followers trod, 25
 And quitting sense call imitating God;
 As Eastern priests in giddy circles run,
 And turn their heads to imitate the sun;
 Go, teach Eternal Wisdom how to rule—
 Then drop into thyself, and be a fool! 30

Superior beings, when of late they saw
 A mortal man unfold all Nature's law,
 Admir'd such wisdom in an earthly shape,
 And shew'd a Newton as we shew an ape.

Could he whose rules the rapid comet bind, 35
 Describe or fix one movement of his mind?
 Who saw its fires here rise and there descend,
 Explain his own beginning or his end?
 Alas! what wonder! man's superior part
 Uncheck'd may rise, and climb from art to art; 40
 But when his own great work is but begun,
 What reason weaves, by passion is undone.

Trace science then, with modesty thy guide:
 First strip off all her equipage of pride;
 Deduct what is but vanity or dress, 45
 Or learning's luxury, or idleness;
 Or tricks to shew the stretch of human brain,
 Mere curious pleasure, or ingenious pain;
 Expunge the whole, or lop th' excrescent parts
 Of all our vices have created arts; 50
 Then see how little the remaining sum,
 Which serv'd the past, and must the times to come!

II. Two principles in human nature reign,
 Self-love to urge, and reason to restrain:
 Nor this a good, nor that a bad we call, 55
 Each works its end to move or govern all;
 And to their proper operation still
 Ascribe all good, to their improper, ill.

Self-love, the spring of motion, acts the soul;
 Reason's comparing balance rules the whole. 60
 Man but for that no action could attend,
 And but for this were active to no end;

Fix'd like a plant on his peculiar spot,
 To draw nutrition, propagate, and rot;
 Or, meteor-like, flame lawless through the void, 65
 Destroying others, by himself destroy'd.
 Most strength the moving principle requires;
 Active its task, it prompts, impels, inspires,
 Sedate and quiet the comparing lies,
 Form'd but to check, deliberate, and advise. 70
 Self-love, still stronger, as its objects nigh,
 Reason's at distance, and in prospect lie:
 That sees immediate good by present sense;
 Reason the future and the consequence.
 Thicker than arguments temptations throng; 75
 At best more watchful this, but that more strong.
 The action of the stronger to suspend
 Reason still use, to reason still attend.
 Attention habit and experience gains;
 Each strengthens reason, and self-love restrains. 80
 Let subtle schoolmen teach these friends to fight,
 More studious to divide than to unite,
 And grace and virtue, sense and reason split,
 With all the rash dexterity of wit.
 Wits, just like fools, at war about a name, 85
 Have full as oft no meaning, or the same.
 Self-love and reason to one end aspire,
 Pain their aversion, pleasure their desire:
 But greedy that, its object would devour;
 This taste the honey, and not wound the flow'r: 90
 Pleasure, or wrong or rightly understood,
 Our greatest evil or our greatest good.

III. Modes of self-love the passions we may call;
 'Tis real good or seeming moves them all:
 But since not every good we can divide, 95
 And reason bids us for our own provide,
 Passions, though selfish, if their means be fair,
 List under reason, and deserve her care;
 Those that imparted court a nobler aim,
 Exalt their kind, and take some virtue's name. 100

In lazy apathy let Stoics boast
 Their virtue fix'd; 'tis fix'd as in a frost;

Contracted all, retiring to the breast;
 But strength of mind is exercise, not rest:
 The rising tempest puts in act the soul; 105
 Parts it may ravage, but preserves the whole.
 On life's vast ocean diversely we sail;
 Reason the card, but passion is the gale;
 Nor God alone in the still calm we find,
 He mounts the storm, and walks upon the wind. 110
 Passions like elements, though born to fight,
 Yet mix'd and soften'd in his work unite:
 These 'tis enough to temper and employ;
 But what composes man can man destroy?
 Suffice, that reason keep to Nature's road; 115
 Subject, compound them, follow her and God.
 Love, hope, and joy, fair pleasure's smiling train,
 Hate, fear, and grief, the family of pain,
 These mix'd with art, and to due bounds confin'd,
 Make and maintain the balance of the mind; 120
 The lights and shades, whose well-accorded strife
 Gives all the strength and colour of our life.

Pleasures are ever in our hands or eyes,
 And when in act they cease, in prospect rise;
 Present to grasp, and future still to find, 125
 The whole employ of body and of mind.
 All spread their charms, but charm not all alike;
 On different senses different objects strike:
 Hence different passions more or less inflame,
 As strong or weak the organs of the frame; 130
 And hence one master-passion in the breast,
 Like Aaron's serpent, swallows up the rest.

As man, perhaps, the moment of his breath
 Receives the lurking principle of death,
 The young disease, that must subdue at length, 135
 Grows with his growth, and strenghtens with his
 strength:

So, cast and mingled with his very frame,
 The mind's disease, its ruling passion, came;
 Each vital humour which should feed the whole,
 Soon flows to this in body and in soul; 140

Whatever warms the heart or fills the head,
 As the mind opens and its functions spread,
 Imagination plies her dangerous art,
 And pours it all upon the peccant part.

Nature its mother, habit is its nurse; 145
 Wit, spirit, faculties, but make it worse;
 Reason itself but gives it edge and pow'r,
 As Heav'n's bless'd beam turns vinegar more sour.

We, wretched subjects, though to lawful sway,
 In this weak queen some favourite still obey. 150

Ah! if she lend not arms as well as rules,
 What can she more than tell us we are fools?
 Teach us to mourn our nature, not to mend;
 A sharp accuser, but a helpless friend!

Or from a judge turn pleader, to persuade 155
 The choice we make, or justify it made;
 Proud of an easy conquest all along,
 She but removes weak passions for the strong:
 So when small humours gather to a gout,
 The doctor fancies he has driven them out. 160

Yes, Nature's road must ever be preferr'd;
 Reason is here no guide, but still a guard:
 'Tis her's to rectify, not overthrow;

And treat this passion more as friend than foe:
 A mightier pow'r the strong direction sends, 165
 And several men impels to several ends;
 Like varying winds, by other passions tost,
 This drives them constant to a certain coast.

Let pow'r or knowledge, gold or glory, please,
 Or (oft' more strong than all) the love of ease; 170
 Through life 'tis follow'd, even at life's expence,
 The merchant's toil, the sage's indolence,
 The monk's humility, the hero's pride;
 All, all alike, find reason on their side.

Th' Eternal Art educating good from ill, 175
 Grafts on this passion our best principle:

'Tis thus the mercury of man is fix'd,
 Strong grows the virtue with his nature mix'd;
 The dross cements what else were too refin'd,
 And in one interest body acts with mind. 180

As fruits ungrateful to the planter's care,
 On savage stocks inserted learn to bear;
 The surest virtues thus from passions shoot,
 Wild nature's vigour working at the root.
 What crops of wit and honesty appear 185
 From spleen, from obstinacy, hate, or fear!
 See anger zeal and fortitude supply;
 Ev'n avarice prudence, sloth philosophy;
 Lust, through some certain strainers well refin'd,
 Is gentle love, and charms all womankind; 190
 Envy, to which th' ignoble mind's a slave,
 Is emulation in the learn'd or brave;
 Nor virtue male or female can we name,
 But what will grow on pride or grow on shame.

Thus nature gives us (let it check our pride) 195
 The virtue nearest to our vice allied:
 Reason the bias turns to good from ill,
 And Nero reigns a Titus if he will.
 The fiery soul abhorr'd in Catiline,
 In Decius charms, in Curtius is divine: 200
 The same ambition can destroy or save,
 And makes a patriot as it makes a knave.

IV. This light and darkness in our chaos join'd,
 What shall divide?—the God within the mind.
 Extremes in nature equal ends produce; 205
 In man they join to some mysterious use;
 Though each by turns the other's bounds invade,
 As in some well-wrought picture light and shade,
 And oft so mix, the difference is too nice,
 Where ends the virtue or begins the vice. 210

Fools! who from hence into the notion fall,
 That vice or virtue there is none at all.
 If white and black blend, soften, and unite
 A thousand ways, is there no black or white?
 Ask your own heart, and nothing is so plain; 215
 'Tis to mistake them costs the time and pain.

V. Vice is a monster of so frightful mien,
 As to be hated needs but to be seen;
 Yet seen too oft, familiar with her face,
 We first endure, then pity, then embrace. 220

But where th' extreme of vice was ne'er agreed:
Ask where's the north?—at York 'tis on the Tweed;
In Scotland at the Orcades; and there
At Greenland, Zembla, or the Lord knows where.
No creature owns it in the first degree, 225
But thinks his neighbour further gone than he;
Ev'n those who dwell beneath its very zone,
Or never feel the rage or never own;
What happier natures shrink at with affright,
The hard inhabitant contends is right. 230

Virtuous and vicious ev'ry man must be,
Few in th' extreme, but all in the degree:
The rogue and fool by fits is fair and wise,
And ev'n the best by fits what they despise.
'Tis but by parts we follow good or ill; 235
For vice or virtue self directs it still;
Each individual seeks a several goal;
But Heav'n's great view is one, and that the whole:
That counterworks each folly and caprice;
That disappoints the effect of ev'ry vice; 240
That happy frailties to all ranks applied,
Shame to the virgin, to the matron pride,
Fear to the statesman, rashness to the chief,
To kings presumption, and to crowds belief;
That virtue's ends from vanity can raise, 245
Which seeks no interest, no reward but praise;
And builds on wants, and on defects of mind,
The joy, the peace, the glory of mankind.

Heav'n forming each on other to depend,
A master, or a servant, or a friend, 250
Bids each on other for assistance call,
Till one man's weakness grows the strength of all.
Wants, frailties, passions, closer still ally
The common interest, or endear the tie.
To these we owe true friendship, love sincere, 255
Each home-felt joy that life inherits here:
Yet from the same we learn, in its decline,
Those joys, those loves, those interests to resign;
Taught, half by reason, half by mere decay,
To welcome death, and calmly pass away. 260

Whate'er the passion, knowledge, fame, or pelf,
 Not one will change his neighbour with himself.
 The learn'd is happy nature to explore,
 The fool is happy that he knows no more;
 The rich is happy in the plenty giv'n, 265
 The poor contents him with the care of Heav'n.
 See the blind beggar dance, the cripple sing.
 The sot a hero, lunatic a king:
 The starving chemist in his golden views
 Supremely bless'd, the poet in his Muse. 270

See some strange comfort every state attend,
 And pride bestow'd on all, a common friend:
 See some fit passion every age supply;
 Hope travels through, nor quits us when we die.

Behold the child, by Nature's kindly law, 275
 Pleas'd with a rattle, tickled with a straw:
 Some livelier plaything gives his youth delight,
 A little louder, but as empty quite;
 Scarfs, garters, gold, amuse his riper stage,
 And beads and pray'r-books are the toys of age: 280
 Pleas'd with this bauble still, as that before,
 Till tir'd he sleeps, and life's poor play is o'er.

Meanwhile opinion gilds with varying rays
 Those painted clouds that beautify our days;
 Each want of happiness by hope supplied, 285
 And each vacuity of sense by pride:
 These build as fast as knowledge can destroy;
 In folly's cup still laughs the bubble joy;
 One prospect lost, another still we gain,
 And not a vanity is given in vain: 290

Ev'n mean self-love becomes, by force divine,
 The scale to measure others' wants by thine.
 See! and confess one comfort still must rise;
 'Tis this,--Though Man's a fool, yet God is wise.

EPISTLE III.

OF THE NATURE AND STATE OF MAN WITH
RESPECT TO SOCIETY.

ARGUMENT.

I. The whole universe one system of society, v. 7, &c. Nothing made wholly for itself, nor yet wholly for another, v. 27. The happiness of animals mutual, v. 49. II. Reason or instinct operate alike to the good of each individual, v. 79. Reason or instinct operate also to society in all animals, v. 99. III. How far society carried by instinct, v. 109; how much farther by reason, v. 131. IV. Of that which is called the State of Nature, v. 147. Reason instructed by instinct in the invention of arts, v. 166; and in the forms of society, v. 176. V. Origin of political societies, v. 199; origin of monarchy, v. 207. Patriarchal government, v. 212. VI. Origin of true religion and government, from the same principle of love, v. 215, &c. Origin of superstition and tyranny, from the same principle of fear, v. 237, &c. The influence of self-love operating to the social and public good, v. 266. Restoration of true religion and government on their first principle, v. 285. Mixed government, v. 288. Various forms of each, and the true end of all, v. 300, &c.

HERE then we rest.--"The Universal Cause
Acts to one end, but acts by various laws."

In all the madness of superfluous health,
The trim of pride, the impudence of wealth,
Let this great truth be present night and day, 5
But most be present, if we preach or pray.

I. Look round our world; behold the chain of love
Combining all below and all above.

See plastic Nature working to this end,
The single atoms each to other tend; 10

Attract, attracted to, the next in place
Form'd and impell'd its neighbour to embrace.

See matter next, with various life endued,
Press to one centre still, the general good; 15

See dying vegetables life sustain, 15
See life dissolving vegetate again:

All forms that perish other forms supply,
(By turns we catch the vital breath, and die,)

Like bubbles on the sea of matter borne,
They rise, they break, and to that sea return. 20

Nothing is foreign; parts relate to whole;

One all-extending, all-preserving, soul
Connects each being, greatest with the least,
Made beast in aid of man, and man of beast;

All serv'd, all serving; nothing stands alone; 25
The chain holds on, and where it ends unknown.

Has God, thou fool! work'd solely for thy good,
 Thy joy, thy pastime, thy attire, thy food?
 Who for thy table feeds the wanton fawn,
 For him as kindly spread the flow'ry lawn. 30
 Is it for thee the lark ascends and sings?---
 Joy tunes his voice, joy elevates his wings.
 Is it for thee the linnet pours his throat?---
 Loves of his own and raptures swell the note.
 The bounding steed you pompously bestride 35
 Shares with his lord the pleasure and the pride.
 Is thine alone the seed that strews the plain?---
 The birds of heaven shall vindicate their grain.
 Thine the full harvest of the golden year?---
 Part pays, and justly, the deserving steer. 40
 The hog that ploughs not, nor obeys thy call,
 Lives on the labour of this lord of all.

Know Nature's children all divide her care;
 The fur that warms a monarch, warm'd a bear.
 While man exclaims, "See all things for my use!"
 "See man for mine!" replies a pamper'd goose: 46
 And just as short of reason he must fall,
 Who thinks all made for one, not one for all.

Grant that the powerful still the weak control;
 Be man the wit and tyrant of the whole: 50
 Nature that tyrant checks; he only knows,
 And helps, another creature's wants and woes.
 Say, will the falcon, stooping from above,
 Smit with her varying plumage, spare the dove?
 Admires the jay the insect's gilded wings? 55
 Or hears the hawk when Philomela sings?---
 Man cares for all; to birds he gives his woods,
 To beasts his pastures, and to fish his floods;
 For some his interest prompts him to provide,
 For more his pleasure, yet for more his pride: 60
 All feed on one vain patron, and enjoy
 Th' extensive blessing of his luxury.
 That very life his learned hunger craves,
 He saves from famine, from the savage saves;
 Nay, feasts the animal he dooms his feast, 65
 And till he ends the being makes it blest;

Which sees no more the stroke, or feels the pain,
Than favour'd man by touch ethereal slain.

The creature had his feast of life before;

Thou, too, must perish when thy feast is o'er! 70

To each unthinking being Heav'n, a friend,
Gives not the useless knowledge of its end:

To man imparts it, but with such a view

As while he dreads it, makes him hope it too:

The hour conceal'd, and so remote the fear, 75

Death still draws nearer, never seeming near.

Great standing miracle! that Heav'n assign'd

Its only thinking thing this turn of mind.

II. Whether with reason or with instinct blest,

Know all enjoy that pow'r which suits them best; 80

To bliss alike by that direction tend,

And find the means proportion'd to their end.

Say, where full instinct is th' unerring guide,

What pope or council can they need beside?

Reason, however able, cool at best, 85

Cares not for service, or but serves when prest.

Stays till we call, and then not often near;

But honest instinct comes a volunteer,

Sure never to o'ershoot, but just to hit,

While still too wide or short is human wit; 90

Sure by quick nature happiness to gain,

Which heavier reason labours at in vain.

This, too, serves always; reason never long:

One must go right, the other may go wrong.

See then the acting and comparing pow'rs 95

One in their nature, which are two in ours;

And reason raise o'er instinct as you can,

In this 'tis God directs, in that 'tis Man.

Who taught the nations of the field and wood,
To shun their poison, and to chuse their food? 100

Prescient, the tides or tempest to withstand,

Build on the wave, or arch beneath the sand?

Who made the spider parallels design,

Sure as De Moivre, without rule or line?

Who bid the stork, Columbus like, explore ' 105

Heav'n's not his own, and worlds unknown before?

Who calls the counsel, states the certain day,
Who forms the phalanx, and who points the way?

III. God in the nature of each being founds
Its proper bliss, and sets its proper bounds; 110
But as he fram'd the whole the whole to bless,
On mutual wants built mutual happiness:
So from the first eternal order ran,
And creature link'd to creature, man to man.

Whate'er of life all-quick'ning ether keeps, 115
Or breathes thro' air, or shoots beneath the deeps,
Or pours profuse on earth, one nature feeds
The vital flame, and swells the genial seeds.

Not man alone, but all that roam the wood,
Or wing the sky, or roll along the flood, 120
Each loves itself, but not itself alone,
Each sex desires alike, till two are one.

Nor ends the pleasure with the fierce embrace:
They love themselves a third time in their race.
Thus beast and bird their common charge attend;
The mothers nurse it, and the sires defend: 126

The young dismiss'd to wander earth or air,
There stops the instinct, and there ends the care;
The link dissolves, each seek a fresh embrace,
Another love succeeds another race. 130

A longer care man's helpless kind demands;
That longer care contracts more lasting bands:
Reflection, reason, still the ties improve,
At once extend the interest and the love;

With choice we fix, with sympathy we burn; 135
Each virtue in each passion takes its turn;
And still new needs, new helps, new habits, rise,
That graft benevolence on charities.

Still as one brood and as another rose,
These natural love maintain'd, habitual those: 140
The last, scarce ripen'd into perfect man,
Saw helpless him from whom their life began:

Memory and forecast just returns engage,
That pointed back to youth, this on to age;
While pleasure, gratitude, and hope, combin'd, 145
Still spread the interest, and preserv'd the kind.

IV. Nor think in Nature's state they blindly trod;
 The state of Nature was the reign of God:
 Self-love and social at her birth began,
 Union the bond of all things, and of man. 150
 Pride then was not, nor arts that pride to aid:
 Man walk'd with beast, joint tenant of the shade;
 The same his table, and the same his bed;
 No murder cloth'd him, and no murder fed:
 In the same temple, the resounding wood, 155
 All vocal beings hymn'd their equal God:
 The shrine with gore unstain'd, with gold undrest,
 Unbrib'd, unbloody, stood the blameless priest:
 Heav'n's attribute was universal care,
 And man's prerogative to rule, but spare. 160
 Ah! how unlike the man of times to come!
 Of half that live the butcher and the tomb;
 Who, foe to Nature, hears the gen'ral groan,
 Murders their species, and betrays his own.
 But just disease to luxury succeeds, 165
 And every death its own avenger breeds;
 The fury-passions from that blood began,
 And turn'd on man a fiercer savage, man.

See him from nature rising slow to art!
 To copy instinct then was reason's part: 170
 Thus then to man the voice of Nature spake---
 "Go, from the creatures thy instructions take:
 Learn from the birds what food the thickets yield;
 Learn from the beasts the physic of the field;
 The arts of building from the bee receive: 175
 Learn of the mole to plough, the worm to weave;
 Learn of the little nautilus to sail,
 Spread the thin oar, and catch the driving gale.
 Here, too, all forms of social union find,
 And hence let Reason, late, instruct mankind: 180
 Here subterranean works and cities see;
 There towns aërial on the waving tree.
 Learn each small people's genius, policics,
 The ants' republic, and the realm of bees;
 How those in common all their wealth bestow, 185
 And anarchy without confusion know;

And these for ever, though a monarch reign,
 Their separate cells and properties maintain.
 Mark what unvaried laws preserve each state,
 Laws wise as nature, and as fix'd as fate. 190
 In vain thy reason finer webs shall draw,
 Entangle justice in her net of law,
 And right, too rigid, harden into wrong,
 Still for the strong too weak, the weak too strong.
 Yet go! and thus o'er all the creatures sway, 195
 Thus let the wiser make the rest obey;
 And for those arts mere instinct could afford,
 Be crown'd as monarchs, or as gods ador'd."

V. Great Nature spoke; observant Man obey'd;
 Cities were built, societies were made; 200
 Here rose one little state; another near
 Grew by like means, and join'd through love or fear.
 Did here the trees with ruddier burthens bend,
 And there the streams in purer rills descend?
 What war could ravish, commerce could bestow,
 And he return'd a friend who came a foe. 206
 Converse and love mankind might strongly draw,
 When love was liberty, and nature law.
 Thus states were form'd, the name of king unknown,
 Till common interest plac'd the sway in one. 210
 'Twas virtue only, (or in arts or arms
 Diffusing blessings, or averting harms,)
 The same which in a sire the sons obey'd,
 A prince the father of a people made. [sate

VI. Till then, by Nature crown'd, each patriarch
 King, priest, and parent, of his growing state; 216
 On him, their second Providence, they hung,
 Their law his eye, their oracle his tongue.
 He from the wond'ring furrow call'd the food,
 Taught to command the fire, control the flood, 220
 Draw forth the monsters of th' abyss profound,
 Or fetch the aërial eagle to the ground;
 Till drooping, sickening, dying, they began
 Whom they rever'd as God to mourn as man:
 Then looking up from sire to sire, explor'd 225
 One great first father, and that first ador'd;

Or plain tradition that this All begun,
 Convey'd unbroken faith from sire to son;
 The worker from the work distinct was known,
 And simple reason never sought but one. 230
 Ere wit oblique had broke that steady light,
 Man, like his maker, saw that all was right;
 To virtue in the paths of pleasure trod,
 And own'd a father when he own'd a God.
 Love all the faith, and all th' allegiance then, 235
 For Nature knew no right divine in men;
 No ill could fear in God, and understood
 A sovereign Being but a sovereign good.
 True faith, true policy, united ran;
 That was but love of God, and this of man. 240

Who first taught souls enslav'd, and realms undone,
 Th' enormous faith of many made for one;
 That proud exception to all Nature's laws,
 T' invert the world, and counterwork its cause.
 Force first made conquest, and that conquest law;
 Till superstition taught the tyrant awe, 246
 Then shar'd the tyranny, then lent it aid,
 And gods of conquerors, slaves of subjects, made:
 She, 'midst the lightning's blaze and thunder's sound,
 When rock'd the mountains, and when groan'd the
 ground, 250

She taught the weak to bend; the proud to pray
 To pow'r unseen, and mightier far than they;
 She, from the rending earth and bursting skies,
 Saw gods descend, and fiends infernal rise;
 Here fix'd the dreadful, there the bless'd abodes; 255
 Fear made her devils, and weak hope her gods;
 Gods partial, changeful, passionate, unjust,
 Whose attributes were rage, revenge, or lust;
 Such as the souls of cowards might conceive,
 And, form'd like tyrants, tyrants would believe. 260
 Zeal then, not charity, became the guide;
 And hell was built on spite, and heav'n on pride:
 Then sacred seem'd th' ethereal vault no more;
 Altars grew marble then, and reek'd with gore:

Then first the flamen tasted living food, 265
 Next his grim idol smear'd with human blood;
 With Heav'n's own thunders shook the world below,
 And play'd the god an engine on his foe,

So drives self-love, through just and through unjust,
 To one man's power, ambition, lucre, lust: 270

The same self-love in all becomes the cause
 Of what restrains him, government and laws.

For, what one likes if others like as well,
 What serves one will, when many wills rebel?

How shall he keep what, sleeping or awake, 275
 A weaker may surprise, a stronger take?

His safety must his liberty restrain:

All join to guard what each desires to gain.

Forc'd into virtue thus by self-defence,
 Ev'n kings learn'd justice and benevolence: 280

Self-love forsook the path it first pursued,
 And found the private in the public good.

'Twas then the studious head, or generous mind,
 Follower of God, or friend of human-kind,

Poet or patriot, rose but to restore 285

The faith and moral Nature gave before;

Relum'd her ancient light, not kindled new;

If not God's image, yet his shadow drew;

Taught power's due use to people and to kings,
 Taught nor to slack nor strain its tender strings, 290

The less or greater set so justly true,

That touching one must strike the other too,

Till jarring interests of themselves create

Th' according music of a well-mix'd state.

Such is the world's great harmony, that springs 295

From order, union, full consent of things;

Where small and great, where weak and mighty, made

To serve, not suffer; strengthen, not invade;

More powerful each as needful to the rest,

And, in proportion as it blesses, blest; 300

Draw to one point, and, to one centre bring,

Beast, man, or angel, servant, lord, or king

For forms of government let fools contest:

Whate'er is best administer'd is best:

For modes of faith let graceless zealots fight; 305
 His can't be wrong whose life is in the right.
 In faith and hope the world will disagree,
 But all mankind's concern is charity:
 All must be false that thwart this one great end;
 And all of God that bless mankind or mend. 310
 Man, like the generous vine, supported lives;
 The strength he gains is from th' embrace he gives.
 On their own axis as the planets run,
 Yet make at once their circle round the sun:
 So two consistent motions act the soul, 315
 And one regards itself, and one the whole.
 Thus God and Nature link'd the general frame,
 And bade self-love and social be the same.

EPISTLE IV.

OF THE NATURE AND STATE OF MAN WITH
 RESPECT TO HAPPINESS.

ARGUMENT.

I. False notions of happiness, philosophical and popular, answered, from v. 19 to 27. II. It is the end of all men, and attainable by all, v. 29. God intends happiness to be equal; and, to be so, it must be social, since all particular happiness depends on general, and since he governs by general, not particular laws, v. 35. As it is necessary for order, and the peace and welfare of society, that external goods should be unequal, happiness is not made to consist in these, v. 51: but, notwithstanding that inequality, the balance of happiness among mankind is kept even by Providence by the two passions of hope and fear, v. 60. III. What the happiness of individuals is, as far as is consistent with the constitution of this world; and that the good man has here the advantage, v. 77. The error of imputing to virtue what are only the calamities of nature, or of fortune, v. 94. IV. The folly of expecting that God should alter his general laws in favour of particulars, v. 121. V. That we are not judges who are good; but that whoever they are, they must be happiest, v. 131, &c. VI. That external goods are not the proper rewards, but often inconsistent with, or destructive of, virtue, v. 167. That even these can make no man happy without virtue, instanced in Riches, v. 185. Honours, v. 193. Nobility, v. 205. Greatness, v. 217. Fame, v. 237. Superior talents, v. 259, &c. with pictures of human infelicity in men possessed of them all, v. 269, &c. VII. That virtue only constitutes a happiness, whose object is universal, and whose prospect eternal, v. 309, &c. That the perfection of virtue and happiness consists in a conformity to the order of Providence here, and a resignation to it here and hereafter, v. 327, &c.

O HAPPINESS! our being's end and aim!
 Good, pleasure, ease, content! whate'er thy name;
 That something still which prompts th' eternal sigh,
 For which we bear to live, or dare to die;

Which still so near us, yet beyond us lies,
 O'erlook'd, seen double, by the fool and wise;
 Plant of celestial seed! if dropp'd below,
 Say in what mortal soil thou deign'st to grow?
 Fair opening to some court's propitious shine,
 Or deep with diamonds in the flaming mine? 10
 Twin'd with the wreaths Parnassian laurels yield,
 Or reap'd in iron harvests of the field?

Where grows!---where grows it not? If vain our toil,
 We ought to blame the culture, not the soil:
 Fix'd to no spot is happiness sincere; 15

'Tis no where to be found, or every where:
 'Tis never to be bought, but always free,
 And fled from monarchs, St. John! dwells with thee.

Ask of the learn'd the way? the learn'd are blind;
 This bids to serve, and that to shun mankind. 20

Some place the bliss in action, some in ease;
 Those call it pleasure, and contentment these;
 Some sunk to beasts, find pleasure end in pain;
 Some swell'd to gods, confess ev'n virtue vain!
 Or indolent, to each extreme they fall, 25
 To trust in ev'ry thing, or doubt of all.

Who thus define it, say they more or less
 Than this, that happiness is happiness?

Take Nature's path, and mad opinions leave;
 All states can reach it, and all heads conceive; 30
 Obvious her goods, in no extreme they dwell;
 There needs but thinking right and meaning well:
 And mourn our various portions as we please,
 Equal is common sense and common ease.

Remember, man, "the Universal Cause 35
 Acts not by partial but by general laws,"
 And makes what happiness we justly call
 Subsist not in the good of one, but all.

There's not a blessing individuals find
 But some way leans and hearkens to the kind; 40
 No bandit fierce, no tyrant mad with pride,
 No cavern'd hermit, rests self-satisfied.
 Who most to shun o'r hate mankind pretend
 Seek an admirer, or would fix a friend.

Abstract what others feel, what others think, 43
 All pleasures sicken, and all glories sink;
 Each has his share; and who would more obtain
 Shall find the pleasure pays not half the pain.

Order is Heav'n's first law; and, this confess,
 Some are and must be greater than the rest, 50
 More rich, more wise: but who infers from hence
 That such are happier, shocks all common sense.
 Heav'n to mankind impartial we confess,
 If all are equal in their happiness:

But mutual wants this happiness increase; 55
 All nature's difference keeps all nature's peace.
 Condition, circumstance, is not the thing;
 Bliss is the same in subject or in king,
 In who obtain defence, or who defend,
 In him who is, or him who finds a friend: 60

Heav'n breathes through every member of the whole
 One common blessing, as one common soul.
 But Fortune's gifts if each alike possess,
 And each were equal, must not all contest?
 If then to all men happiness was meant, 65
 God in externals could not place content.

Fortune her gifts may variously dispose,
 And these be happy called, unhappy those;
 But Heav'n's just balance equal will appear,
 While those are plac'd in hope and these in fear: 70
 Not present good or ill the joy or curse,
 But future views of better or of worse.

O sons of earth! attempt ye still to rise
 By mountains pil'd on mountains to the skies?
 Heav'n still with laughter the vain toil surveys, 75
 And buries madmen in the heaps they raise.

Know all the good that individuals find,
 Or God and Nature meant to mere mankind,
 Reason's whole pleasure, all the joys of sense,
 Lie in three words—health, peace, and competence.
 But health consists with temperance alone; 81
 And peace, O Virtue, peace is all thy own.
 The good or bad the gifts of fortune gain;
 But these less taste them as they worse obtain.

Say, in pursuit of profit or delight, 85
Who risk the most, that take wrong means or right?
Of vice or virtue, whether bless'd or curst,
Which meets contempt, or which compassion first?
Count all th' advantage prosperous vice attains,
'Tis but what virtue flies from and disdains: 90
And grant the bad what happiness they would,
One they must want, which is to pass for good.

Oh! blind to truth, and God's whole scheme below,
Who fancy bliss to vice, to virtue woe!
Who sees and follows that great scheme the best, 95
Best knows the blessing, and will most be blest.

But fools the good alone unhappy call,
For ills or accidents that chance to all.
See Falkland dies, the virtuous and the just!
See godlike Turenne prostrate on the dust! 100

See Sidney bleeds amid the martial strife!
Was this their virtue or contempt of life?
Say, was it virtue, more though Heav'n ne'er gave,
Lamented Digby! sunk thee to the grave?
Tell me, if virtue made the son expire, 105

Why full of days and honour lives the sire?
Why drew Marseilles' good bishop purer breath,
When nature sicken'd, and each gale was death?
Or why so long (in life if long can be)
Lent Heav'n a parent to the poor and me? 110

What makes all physical or moral ill?
There deviates nature, and here wanders will,
God sends not ill, if rightly understood,
Or partial ill is universal good,
Or change admits, or nature lets it fall, 115
Short and but rare till man improv'd it all.

We just as wisely might of Heav'n complain
That righteous Abel was destroyed by Cain,
As that the virtuous son is ill at ease
When his lewd father gave the dire disease. 120

Think we, like some weak prince, th' Eternal Cause
Prone for his favourites to reverse his laws?

Shall burning Ætna, if a sage requires,
Forget to thunder, and recall her fires?

On air or sea new motions be imprest, 125

O blameless Bethel! to relieve thy breast?

When the loose mountain trembles from on high,

Shall gravitation cease if you go by?

Or some old temple, nodding to its fall,

For Chartres' head reserve the hanging wall? 130

But still this world (so fitted for the knave)

Contents us not.—A better shall we have?

A kingdom of the just then let it be;

But first consider how those just agree.

The good must merit God's peculiar care; 135

But who but God can tell us who they are?

One thinks on Calvin Heav'n's own spirit fell;

Another deems him instrument of hell:

If Calvin feel Heav'n's blessing or it's rod,

This cries there is, and that there is no God. 140

What shocks one part will edify the rest;

Nor with one system can they all be blest.

The very best will variously incline,

And what rewards your virtue punish mine.

Whatever is is right.—This world, 'tis true, 145

Was made for Cæsar—but for Titus too:

And which more bless'd? who chain'd his country, say,

Or he whose virtue sigh'd to lose a day?---

“But sometimes virtue starves while vice is fed.”

What then? is the reward of virtue bread? 150

That vice may merit; 'tis the price of toil;

The knave deserves it when he tills the soil;

The knave deserves it when he tempts the main,

Where folly fights for kings or dives for gain.

The good man may be weak, be indolent; 155

Nor is his claim to plenty but content.

But grant him riches, your demand is o'er?

“No—shall the good want health, the good want
pow'r?”

Add health and pow'r, and ev'ry earthly thing;

“Why bounded pow'r? why private? why no king?

Nay, why external for internal giv'n?

Why is not man a god, and earth a heav'n?”—

Who ask and reason thus will scarce conceive
 God gives enough while he has more to give:
 Immense the pow'r, immense were the demand;
 Say at what part of nature will they stand? 166

What nothing earthly gives or can destroy,
 The soul's calm sunshine and the heart-felt joy,
 Is virtue's prize. A better would you fix?
 Then give humility a coach and six, 170
 Justice a conqueror's sword, or truth a gown,
 Or public spirit its great cure, a crown.

Weak, foolish man! will Heav'n reward us there
 With the same trash mad mortals wish for here?
 The boy and man an individual makes, 175

Yet sigh'st thou now for apples and for cakes?
 Go, like the Indian, in another life
 Expect thy dog, thy bottle, and thy wife,
 As well as dream such trifles are assign'd,
 As toys and empires, for a godlike mind: 180
 Rewards that either would to virtue bring
 No joy, or be destructive of the thing.

How oft by these at sixty are undone
 The virtues of a saint at twenty-one!
 To whom can riches give repute or trust, 185
 Content or pleasure, but the good and just?
 Judges and senates have been bought for gold;
 Esteem and love were never to be sold.

O fool! to think God hates the worthy mind,
 The lover and the love of human kind, 190
 Whose life is healthful, and whose conscience clear,
 Because he wants a thousand pounds a year!

Honour and shame from no condition rise;
 Act well your part, there all the honour lies.
 Fortune in men has some small difference made, 195
 One flaunts in rags, one flutters in brocade;
 The cobbler apron'd, and the parson gown'd,
 The friar hooded, and the monarch crown'd.

"What differ more (you cry) than crown and cowl?"
 I'll tell you, friend, a wise man and a fool. 200
 You'll find if once the monarch acts the monk,
 Or, cobbler-like, the parson will be drunk,

Worth makes the man, and want of it the fellow;
The rest is all but leather or prunella. 204

Stuck o'er with titles, and hung round with strings,
That thou may'st be by kings, or whores of kings.

Boast the pure blood of an illustrious race,

In quiet flow from Lucrece to Lucrece:

But by your father's worth if your's you rate,

Count me those only who were good and great. 210

Go! if your ancient but ignoble blood

Has crept through scoundrels ever since the flood,

Go! and pretend your family is young,

Nor own your fathers have been fools so long.

What can ennoble sots, or slaves, or cowards?— 215

Alas! not all the blood of all the Howards.

Look next on greatness; say where greatness lies?

“Where but among the heroes and the wise?”

Heroes are much the same, the point's agreed,

From Macedonia's madman to the Swede; 220

The whole strange purpose of their lives to find

Or make an enemy of all mankind!

Not one looks backward, onward still he goes,

Yet ne'er looks forward further than his nose.

No less alike the politic and wise; 225

All sly slow things with circumspective eyes:

Men in their loose unguarded hours they take,

Not that themselves are wise, but others weak.

But grant that those can conquer, these can cheat,

'Tis phrase absurd to call a villain great: 230

Who wickedly is wise, or madly brave,

Is but the more a fool, the more a knave.

Who noble ends by noble means obtains,

Or failing, smiles in exile or in chains,

Like good Aurelius let him reign, or bleed 235

Like Socrates;---that man is great indeed.

What's fame?---a fancied life in other's breath;

A thing beyond us ev'n before our death:

Just what you hear you have; and what's unknown

The same (my lord) if Tully's or your own. 240

All that we feel of it begins and ends

In the small circle of our foes or friends;

To all beside as much an empty shade,
 An Eugene living as a Cæsar dead;
 Alike or when or where they shone or shine, 245
 Or on the Rubicon or on the Rhine.

A wit's a feather, and a chief a rod;
 An honest man's the noblest work of God.
 Fame but from death a villain's name can save,
 As justice tears his body from the grave; 250
 When what t' oblivion better were resign'd
 Is hung on high to poison half mankind.

All fame is foreign but of true desert,
 Plays round the head, but comes not to the heart:
 One self-approving hour whole years outweighs 255
 Of stupid starers and of loud huzzas;
 And more true joy Marcellus exil'd feels
 Than Cæsar with a senate at his heels.

In parts superior what advantage lies?
 Tell (for you can) what is it to be wise? 260
 'Tis but to know how little can be known,
 To see all others' faults, and feel our own;
 Condemn'd in business or in arts to drudge,
 Wichout a second, or without a judge.

Truths would you teach, or save a sinking land?
 All fear, none aid you, and few understand. 266
 Painful pre-eminence! yourself to view
 Above life's weakness, and its comforts too.

Bring then these blessings to a strict account;
 Make fair deductions; see to what they'mount; 270
 How much of other each is sure to cost;
 How each for other oft is wholly lost;
 How inconsistent greater goods with these;
 How sometimes life is risk'd, and always ease:
 Think, and if still the things thy envy call, 275
 Say, wouldst thou be the man to whom they fall?
 To sigh for ribbands if thou art so silly,
 Mark how they grace Lord Umbra or Sir Billy.
 Is yellow dirt the passion of thy life?

Look but on Gripus or on Gripus' wife. 280
 If parts allure thee, think how Bacon shin'd,
 The wisest, brightest, meanest of mankind!

Or ravish'd with the whistling of a name,
 See Cromwell damn'd to everlasting fame!
 If all united thy ambition call, 285
 From ancient story learn to scorn them all:
 There in the rich, the honour'd, fam'd, and great,
 See the false scale of happiness complete!
 In hearts of kings or arms of queens who lay,
 How happy! those to ruin, these betray. 290
 Mark by what wretched steps their glory grows,
 From dirt and sea-weed, as proud Venice rose;
 In each how guilt and greatness equal ran,
 And all that rais'd the hero sunk the man;
 Now Europe's laurels on their brows behold, 295
 But stain'd with blood, or ill-exchang'd for gold;
 Then see them broke with toils, or sunk in ease,
 Or infamous for plunder'd provinces.
 O wealth ill-fated! which no act of fame
 E'er taught to shine, or sanctified from shame! 300
 What greater bliss attends their close of life?
 Some greedy minion, or imperious wife,
 The trophied arches, storied halls invade,
 And haunt their slumbers in the pompous shade.
 Alas! not dazzled with their noontide ray, 305
 Compute the morn and evening to the day;
 The whole amount of that enormous fame,
 A tale that blends their glory with their shame!
 Know then this truth (enough for man to know),
 "Virtue alone is happiness below:" 310
 The only point where human bliss stands still,
 And tastes the good without the fall to ill;
 Where only merit constant pay receives,
 Is bless'd in what it takes and what it gives;
 The joy unequall'd if its end it gain, 315
 And, if it lose, attended with no pain:
 Without satiety, though e'er so bless'd,
 And but more relish'd as the more distress'd:
 The broadest mirth unfeeling folly wears,
 Less pleasing far than virtue's very tears: 320
 Good from each object, from each place, acquir'd,
 For ever exercis'd, yet never tir'd;

Never elated while one man's oppress'd;
 Never dejected while another's bless'd;
 And where no wants no wishes can remain, 325
 Since but to wish more virtue is to gain.

See the sole bliss Heav'n could on all bestow!
 Which who but feels can taste, but thinks can know:
 Yet poor with fortune, and with learning blind,
 The bad must miss, the good untaught will find; 330
 Slave to no sect, who takes no private road,
 But looks through Nature up to Nature's God;
 Pursues that chain which links th' immense design,
 Joins heav'n and earth, and mortal and divine;
 Sees that no being any bliss can know, 335
 But touches some above and some below;
 Learns from this union of the rising whole,
 The first, last purpose of the human soul;
 And knows where faith, law, morals, all began,
 All end, in love of God and love of man. 340

For him alone hope leads from goal to goal,
 And opens still and opens on his soul,
 Till lengthen'd on to faith, and unconfin'd,
 It pours the bliss that fills up all the mind.
 He sees why nature plants in man alone 345
 Hope of known bliss, and faith in bliss unknown:
 (Nature, whose dictates to no other kind
 Are giv'n in vain, but what they seek they find)
 Wise is her present; she connects in this
 His greatest virtue with his greatest bliss; 350
 At once his own bright prospect to be blest,
 And strongest motive to assist the rest.

Self-love thus push'd to social, to divine,
 Gives thee to make thy neighbour's blessings thine.
 Is this too little for the boundless heart? 355
 Extend it, let thy enemies have part:
 Grasp the whole world of reason, life, and sense
 In one close system of benevolence:
 Happier as kinder, in whate'er degree,
 And height of bliss but height of charity. 360

God loves from whole to parts; but human soul
 Must rise from individual to the whole.

Self-love but serves the virtuous mind to wake,
 As the small pebble stirs the peaceful lake;
 The centre mov'd, a circle straight succeeds, 365
 Another still, and still another spreads;
 Friend, parent, neighbour, first it will embrace;
 His country next, and next all human race:
 Wide and more wide, th' o'erflowings of the mind
 Take ev'ry creature in of ev'ry kind. 370
 Earth smiles around, with boundless bounty blest,
 And Heav'n beholds its image in his breast.

Come then, my friend! my genius! come along;
 O master of the poet and the song!
 And while the Muse now stoops, or now ascends, 375
 To man's low passions, or their glorious ends,
 Teach me, like thee, in various nature wise,
 To fall with dignity, with temper rise;
 Form'd by thy converse happily to steer
 From grave to gay, from lively to severe; 380
 Correct with spirit, eloquent with ease,
 Intent to reason, or polite to please.
 Oh! while along the stream of time thy name
 Expanded flies, and gathers all its fame,
 Say, shall my little bark attendant sail, 385
 Pursue the triumph, and partake the gale?
 When statesmen, heroes, kings, in dust repose,
 Whose sons shall blush their fathers were thy foes,
 Shall then this verse to future age pretend
 Thou wert my guide, philosopher, and friend? 390
 That, urg'd by thee, I turn'd the tuneful art
 From sounds to things, from fancy to the heart;
 For wit's false mirror held up nature's light,
 Shew'd erring pride—whatever is is right;
 That reason, passion, answer one great aim; 395
 That true self-love and social are the same;
 That virtue only makes our bliss below,
 And all our knowledge is—ourselves to know.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER.

- DEO OPT. MAX.

FATHER of all! in every age,
In ev'ry clime, ador'd,
By saint, by savage, and by sage,
Jehovah, Jove, or Lord!

Thou Great First Cause, least understood,
Who all my sense confin'd
To know but this, that thou art good,
And that myself am blind:

Yet gave me in this dark estate,
To see the good from ill;
And binding nature fast in fate,
Left free the human will.

What conscience dictates to be done,
Or warns me not to do,
This teach me more than hell to shun,
That more than Heav'n pursue.

What blessings thy free bounty gives
Let me not cast away;
For God is paid when man receives:
T' enjoy is to obey.

Yet not to earth's contracted span
Thy goodness let me bound,
Or think thee Lord alone of man,
When thousand worlds are round.

Let not this weak unknowing hand
Presume thy bolts to throw,
And deal damnation round the land
On each I judge thy foe.

If I am right, thy grace impart,
Still in the right to stay;
If I am wrong, O teach my heart
To find that better way.

Save me alike from foolish pride
Or impious discontent,
At aught thy wisdom has denied,
Or aught thy goodness lent.

Teach me to feel another's woe,
To hide the fault I see.
That mercy I to others show,
That mercy shew to me.

Mean though I am, not wholly so,
Since quicken'd by thy breath.
O lead me, wheresoe'er I go,
Through this day's life or death!

This day be bread and peace my lot:
All else beneath the sun
Thou know'st if best bestow'd or not,
And let thy will be done.

To Thee, whose temple is all space,
Whose altar earth, sea, skies!
One chorus let all being raise!
All nature's incense rise!



MORAL ESSAYS.

IN FOUR EPISTLES.

Est brevitæ opus, ut currat sententia, neu se
Impediat verbis lassas onerantibus aures:
Et sermone opus est modo tristi, sæpe jocosæ,
Defendente vicem modo rhetoris atque poetæ,
Interdum urbani parcentis viribus, atque
Extenuantis eas consulto. *Hor.*

ADVERTISEMENT.

(*BY DR. WARBURTON.*)

THE Essay on Man was intended to have been comprised in four books:

The first of which the author has given us under that title in four epistles.

The second was to have consisted of the same number: 1. Of the extent and limits of human reason. 2. Of those arts and sciences, and of the parts of them, which are useful, and therefore attainable; together with those which are unuseful, and therefore unattainable. 3. Of the nature, ends, use, and application of the different capacities of men. 4. Of the use of learning, of the science of the world, and of wit; concluding with a satire against the misapplication of them, illustrated by pictures, characters, and examples.

The third book regarded civil regimen, or the science of politics, in which the several forms of a republic were to be examined and explained; together with the several modes of religious worship, as far forth as they effect society: between which the author always supposed there was the most interesting relation and closest connection; so that this part would have treated of civil and religious society in their full extent.

The fourth and last book concerned private ethics, or practical morality, considered in all the circumstances, orders, professions, and stations of human life.

The scheme of all this had been maturely digested, and communicated to Lord Bolingbroke, Dr. Swift, and one or two more, and was intended for the only

work of his riper years; but was, partly through ill health, partly through discouragements from the depravity of the times, and partly on prudential and other considerations, interrupted, postponed, and, lastly, in a manner laid aside.

But as this was the author's favourite work, which more exactly reflected the image of his strong capacious mind, and as we can have but a very imperfect idea of it from the *disjecta membra poetæ* that now remain, it may not be amiss to be a little more particular concerning each of these projected books.

The first, as it treats of man in the abstract, and considers him in general under every of his relations, becomes the foundation, and furnishes out the subjects of the three following: so that

The second book was to take up again the first and second epistles of the first book, and to treat of man in his intellectual capacity at large, as has been explained above. Of this only a small part of the conclusion (which, as we said, was to have contained a satire against the misapplication of wit and learning) may be found in the fourth book of the *Dunciad*, and up and down, occasionally, in the other three.

The third book, in like manner, was to reassume the subject of the third epistle of the first, which treats of man in his social, political, and religious capacity. But this part the poet afterwards conceived might be best executed in an epic poem, as the action would make it more animated, and the fable less invidious; in which all the great principles of true and false governments and religions should be chiefly delivered in feigned examples.

The fourth and last book was to pursue the subject of the fourth epistle of the first, and to treat of ethics, or practical morality; and would have consisted of many members; of which the four following epistles were detached portions: the two first, on the characters of men and women, being the introductory part of this concluding book.

MORAL ESSAYS.

EPISTLE I.

TO SIR RICHARD TEMPLE, LORD COBHAM.

OF THE KNOWLEDGE AND CHARACTERS OF MEN.

ARGUMENT.

I. That it is not sufficient for this knowledge to consider man in the abstract: books will not serve the purpose, nor yet our own experience singly, v. 1. General maxims, unless they be formed upon both, will be but notional, v. 10. Some peculiarity in every man, characteristic to himself, yet varying from himself, v. 15. Difficulties arising from our own passions, fancies, faculties, &c. v. 31. The shortness of life to observe in, and the uncertainty of the principles of action in men to observe by, v. 37, &c. Our own principle of action often hid from ourselves, v. 41. Some few characters plain, but in general confounded, dissembled, and inconsistent, v. 51. The same man utterly different in different places and seasons, v. 71. Imaginable weaknesses in the greatest, v. 77, &c. Nothing constant and certain but God and Nature, v. 95. No judging of the motives from the actions; the same actions proceeding from contrary motives, and the same motives influencing contrary actions, v. 100. II. Yet to form characters we can only take the strongest actions of a man's life, and try to make them agree: the utter uncertainty of this, from nature itself, and from policy, v. 120. Characters given according to the rank of men of the world, v. 135; and some reason for it, v. 140. Education alters the nature, or at least character, of many, v. 149. Actions, passions, opinions, manners, humours, or principles, all subject to change. No judging by nature, v. 158—174. III. It only remains to find (if we can) his ruling passion: that will certainly influence all the rest, and can reconcile the seeming or real inconsistency of all his actions, v. 175. Instanced in the extraordinary character of Clodio, v. 179. A caution against mistaking second qualities for first, which will destroy all possibility of the knowledge of mankind, v. 210. Examples of the strength of the ruling passion, and its continuation to the last breath, v. 222, &c.

PART I.

YES, you despise the man to books confin'd,
Who from his study rails at human-kind;
Though what he learns he speaks, and may advance
Some general maxims, or be right by chance.
The coxcomb bird, so talkative and grave, 5
That from his cage cries cuckold, whore, and knave;
Though many a passenger he rightly call,
You hold him no philosopher at all.

And yet the fate of all extremes is such,
Men may be read, as well as books, too much. 10
To observations which ourselves we make,
We grow more partial for th' observer's sake;
To written wisdom, as another's, less:
Maxims are drawn from notions, these from guess.
There's some peculiar in each leaf and grain, 15
Some unmark'd fibre, or some varying vein.

Shall only man be taken in the gross?

Grant but as many sorts of mind as moss.

That each from others differs, first confess;

Next, that he varies from himself no less; 20

Add nature's, custom's, reason's, passion's strife,

And all opinion's colours cast on life.

Our depths who fathoms, or our shallows finds?

Quick-whirls and shifting eddies of our minds.

On human actions reason though you can, 25

It may be reason, but it is not man;

His principle of action once explore,

That instant 'tis his principle no more.

Like following life through creatures you dissect,

You lose it in the moment you detect. 30

Yet more; the difference is as great between

The optics seeing as the objects seen.

All manners take a tincture from our own,

Or come discolour'd through our passions shown;

Or fancy's beam enlarges, multiplies, 35

Contracts, inverts, and gives ten thousand dyes.

Nor will life's stream for observation stay,

It hurries all too fast to mark their way:

In vain sedate reflections we would make,

When half our knowledge we must snatch, not take,

Oft in the passions' wild rotation tost, 41

Our spring of action to ourselves is lost:

Tir'd, not determin'd, to the last we yield,

And what comes then is master of the field.

As the least image of that troubled heap. 45

When sense subsides, and fancy sports in sleep,

(Though past the recollection of the thought)

Becomes the stuff of which our dream is wrought;

Something as dim to our internal view

Is thus, perhaps, the cause of most we do. 50

True, some are open, and to all men known;

Others so very close they're hid from none;

(So darkness strikes the sense no less than light:)

Thus gracious Chandos is beloved at sight;

And every child hates Shylock, though his soul 55

Sits still at squat, and peeps not from its hole.

At half mankind when generous Manly raves,
All know 'tis virtue, for he thinks them knaves :
When universal homage Umbra pays,
All see 'tis vice, and itch of vulgar praise. 60

When flattery glares all hate it in a queen,
While one there is who charms us with his spleen :

But these plain characters we rarely find ;
Though strong the bent, yet quick the turns of mind :
Or puzzling contraries confound the whole, 65
Or affectation quite reverse the soul.

The dull flat falsehood serves for policy ;
And in the cunning truth itself's a lie :
Unthought-of frailties cheat us in the wise ;
The fool lies hid in inconsistencies. 70

See the same man in vigour, in the gout,
Alone, in company, in place, or out ;
Early at business, and at hazard late,
Mad at a fox-chase, wise at a debate,
Drunk at a borough, civil at a ball, 75
Friendly at Hackney, faithless at Whitehall.

Catius is ever moral, ever grave,
Thinks who endures a knave is next a knave,
Save just at dinner—then prefers, no doubt,
A rogue with venison to a saint without. 80

Who would not praise Patricio's high desert,
His hand unstain'd, his uncorrupted heart,
His comprehensive head ! all interests weigh'd,
All Europe sav'd, yet Britain not betray'd.
He thanks you not, his pride is in piquette, 85
Newmarket fame, and judgment at a bett.

What made (say Montaigne, or more sage Charron)
Otho a warrior, Cromwell a buffoon ?
A perjur'd prince a leaden saint revere,
A godless regent tremble at a star ? 90

The throne a bigot keep, a genius quit,
Faithless through piety, and dup'd through wit ?
Europe a woman, child, or dotard, rule,
And just her wisest monarch made a fool ?

Know, God and Nature only are the same. 95
In man the judgment shoots at flying game ;

A bird of passage, gone as soon as found;
Now in the moon, perhaps now under ground.

PART II.

IN vain the sage, with retrospective eye, 99
Would from th' apparent what conclude the why,
Infer the motive from the deed, and show
That what we chanc'd was what we meant to do.
Behold! if fortune or a mistress frowns,
Some plunge in business, others shave their crowns:
To ease the soul of one oppressive weight, 105
This quits an empire, that embroils a state.
The same adust complexion has impell'd.
Charles to the convent, Philip to the field.

Not always actions shew the man: we find
Who does a kindness is not therefore kind; 110
Perhaps prosperity becalm'd his breast;
Perhaps the wind just shifted from the east:
Not therefore humble he who seeks retreat;
Pride guides his steps, and bids him shun the great.
Who combats bravely is not therefore brave; 115
He dreads a death-bed like the meanest slave.
Who reasons wisely is not therefore wise;
His pride in reasoning, not in acting lies.

But grant that actions best discover man;
Take the most strong, and sort them as you can:
The few that glare each character must mark; 121
You balance not the many in the dark.
What will you do with such as disagree?
Suppress them, or miscall them policy?
Must then at once (the character to save) 125
The plain rough hero turn a crafty knave?
Alas! in truth, the man but chang'd his mind;
Perhaps was sick, in love, or had not din'd.
Ask why from Britain Cæsar would retreat?
Cæsar himself might whisper, he was beat. 130
Why risk the world's great empire for a punk?
Cæsar perhaps might answer, he was drunk.
But, sage historians! 'tis your task to prove
One action conduct, one heroic love.

'Tis from high life high characters are drawn;
 A saint in crape is twice a saint in lawn: 136
 A judge is just, a chancellor juster still;
 A gownman learn'd; a bishop what you will:
 Wise if a minister; but if a king,
 More wise, more learn'd, more just, more ev'ry thing.
 Court-virtues bear, like gems, the highest rate, 141
 Born where Heav'n's influence scarce can penetrate.
 In life's low vale, the soil the virtues like,
 They please as beauties, here as wonders strike.
 Though the same sun with all-diffusive rays 145
 Blush in the rose, and in the diamond blaze,
 We prize the stronger effort of his power,
 And justly set the gem above the flower.

'Tis education forms the common mind;
 Just as the twig is bent the tree's inclin'd. 150
 Boastful and rough, your first son is a 'squire;
 The next a tradesman, meek, and much a liar;
 Tom struts a soldier, open, bold, and brave;
 Will sneaks a scrivener, an exceeding knave.
 Is he a churchman?—then he's fond of pow'r: 155 }
 A quaker?—sly: a presbyterian?—sour: }
 A smart free-thinker?—all things in an hour. }
 Ask men's opinion; Scoto now shall tell,
 How trade increases, and the world goes well;
 Strike off his pension by the setting sun, 160
 And Britain, if not Europe, is undone.

That gay free-thinker, a fine talker once,
 What turns him now a stupid silent dunce?
 Some god or spirit he has lately found,
 Or chanc'd to meet a minister that frown'd. 165

Judge we by Nature?—habit can efface,
 Interest o'ercome, or policy take place.
 By actions?—those uncertainty divides:
 By passions?—these dissimulation hides:
 Opinions?—they still take a wider range: 170
 Find, if you can, in what you cannot change.

Manners with fortunes, humours turn with climes.
 Tenets with books, and principles with times.

PART III.

SEARCH then the ruling passion: there, alone,
 The wild are constant, and the cunning known; 175
 The fool consistent, and the false sincere;
 Priests, princes, women, no dissemblers here.
 This clue once found unravels all the rest,
 The prospect clears, and Wharton stands confest.
 Wharton! the scorn and wonder of our days, 180
 Whose ruling passion was the lust of praise:
 Born with whate'er could win it from the wise,
 Women and fools must like him, or he dies:
 Though wondering senates hung on all he spoke,
 The club must hail him master of the joke. 185
 Shall parts so various aim at nothing new?
 He'll shine a Tully and a Wilmot too:
 Then turns repentant, and his God adores
 With the same spirit that he drinks and whores;
 Enough if all around him but admire, 190
 And now the punk applaud, and now the friar.
 Thus with each gift of nature and of art,
 And wanting nothing but an honest heart;
 Grown all to all, from no one vice exempt,
 And most contemptible to shun contempt; 195
 His passion still to covet general praise,
 His life to forfeit it a thousand ways;
 A constant bounty which no friend has made;
 An angel tongue which no man can persuade;
 A fool with more of wit than half mankind, 200
 Too rash for thought, for action too refin'd;
 A tyrant to the wife his heart approves;
 A rebel to the very king he loves;
 He dies, sad outcast of each church and state,
 And, harder still! flagitious, yet not great! 205
 Ask you why Wharton broke through every rule?—
 'Twas all for fear the knaves should call him fool.
 Nature well known, no prodigies remain;
 Comets are regular, and Wharton plain.
 Yet in this search the wisest may mistake, 210
 If second qualities for first they take.

When Cataline by rapine swell'd his store,
 When Cæsar made a noble dame a whore,
 In this the lust, in that the avarice,
 Were means, not ends; ambition was the vice. 215
 That very Cæsar, born in Scipio's days,
 Had aim'd, like him, by chastity, at praise.
 Lucullus, when frugality could charm,
 Had roasted turnips in the Sabine farm.
 In vain th' observer eyes the builder's toil; 220
 But quite mistakes the scaffold for the pile.

In this one passion man can strength enjoy,
 As fits give vigour just when they destroy.
 Time, that on all things lays his lenient hand,
 Yet tames not this; it sticks to our last sand. 225
 Consistent in our follies and our sins,
 Here honest Nature ends as she begins.

Old politicians chew on wisdom past,
 And totter on in business to the last;
 As weak, as earnest, and as gravely out 230
 As sober Lanesb'row dancing in the gout.

Behold a reverend sire, whom want of grace
 Has made the father of a nameless race,
 Shov'd from the wall perhaps, or rudely press'd
 By his own son, that passes by unblest'd; 235
 Still to his wench he crawls on knocking knees,
 And envies every sparrow that he sees.

A salmon's belly, Helluo, was thy fate;
 The doctor call'd, declares all help too late.
 "Mercy!" cries Helluo, "mercy on my soul! 240
 Is there no hope?—Alas!—then bring the jowl."

The frugal crone, whom praying priests attend,
 Still strives to save the hallow'd taper's end,
 Collects her breath, as ebbing life retires,
 For one puff more, and in that puff expires. 245
 "Odious! in woollen! 'twould a saint provoke,
 (Were the last words that poor Narcissa spoke!)
 No, let a charming chintz and Brussels lace
 Wrap my cold limbs, and shade my lifeless face:
 One would not, sure, be frightful when one's dead—
 And—Betty—give this cheek a little red." 251

The Courtier smooth, who forty years had shin'd
 An humble servant to all human-kind, [stir,
 Just brought out this, when scarce his tongue could
 "If---where I'm going---I could serve you, sir?"

"I give and I devise (old Euclio said, 256
 And sigh'd) my lands and tenements to Ned."

"Your money, sir?"---"My money, sir, what, all?
 Why---if I must---(then wept) I give it Paul."

"The manor, sir?"---"The manor! hold, (he cried,)
 Not that---I cannot part with that"---and died. 261

And you, brave Cobham! to the latest breath,
 Shall feel your ruling passion strong in death;
 Such in those moments as in all the past,
 "Oh! save my country, Heav'n!" shall be your last.

EPISTLE II.

TO A LADY.

OF THE CHARACTERS OF WOMEN.

ARGUMENT.

That the particular characters of women are not so strongly marked as those of men, seldom so fix'd, and still more inconsistent with themselves, v. 1, &c. Instances of contrarieties, given even from such characters as are more strongly marked, and seemingly, therefore, most consistent: as, 1. In the affected, v. 21. &c. 2. In the soft natured, v. 29, and 37. 3. In the cunning and artful, v. 45. 4. In the whimsical, v. 53. 5. In the lewd and vicious, v. 69. 6. In the witty and refined, v. 87. 7. In the stupid and simple, v. 101. The former part having shewn that the particular characters of women are more various than those of men, it is nevertheless observed, that the general characteristic of the sex, as to the ruling passion, is more uniform, v. 207. This is occasioned partly by their nature, partly by their education, and in some degree by necessity, v. 211. What are the aims and the fate of this sex---1. As to power, v. 219. 2. As to pleasure, v. 231. Advice for their true interest, v. 249. The picture of an estimable woman, with the best kind of contrarieties, v. 269.

Nothing so true as what you once let fall,
 "Most women have no characters at all:"
 Matter too soft a lasting mark to bear,
 And best distinguish'd by black, brown, or fair.

How many pictures of one nymph we view, 5
 All how unlike each other, all how true!
 Arcadia's countess here, in ermin'd pride,
 Is there Pastora by a fountain side:

Here Fannia leering on her own good man,
 And there a naked Leda with a swan. 10
 Let then the fair one beautifully cry,
 In Magdalen's loose hair and lifted eye;
 Or dress'd in smiles of sweet Cecilia shine,
 With simpering angels, palms, and harps divine;
 Whether the charmer sinner it, or saint it, 15
 If folly grow romantic, I must paint it.

Come then, the colours and the ground prepare!
 Dip in the rainbow, trick her off in air;
 Chuse a firm cloud before it fall, and in it,
 Catch, ere she change, the Cynthia of this minute. 20

Rufa, whose eye quick-glancing o'er the Park
 Attracts each light gay meteor of a spark,
 Agrees as ill with Rufa studying Locke,
 As Sappho's diamonds with her dirty smock;
 Or Sappho at her toilette's greasy task, 25
 With Sappho fragrant at an evening mask:
 So morning insects, that in muck begun,
 Shine, buzz, and fly-blow in the setting sun.
 How soft is Silia! fearful to offend;
 The frail one's advocate, the weak one's friend; 30
 To her Calista prov'd her conduct nice,
 And good Simplicius asks of her advice.
 Sudden she storms! she raves! you tip the wink;
 But spare your censure; Silia does not drink.
 All eyes may see from what the change arose; 35
 All eyes may see—a pimple on her nose.

Papillia, wedded to her amorous spark,
 Sighs for the shades—"How charming is a park!"
 A park is purchas'd; but the fair he sees
 All bath'd in tears—"Oh, odious, odious trees!" 40

Ladies, like variegated tulips show;
 'Tis to their changes half the charms we owe:
 Fine by defect, and delicately weak,
 Their happy spots the nice admirer take.
 'Twas thus Calypso once each heart alarm'd, 45
 Aw'd without virtue, without beauty charm'd;
 Her tongue bewitch'd as oddly as her eyes;
 Less wit than mimic, more a wit than wise;

Strange graces still, and stranger flights, she had :
 Was just not ugly, and was just not mad ; 50
 Yet ne'er so sure our passion to create
 As when she touch'd the brink of all we hate.

Narcissa's nature, tolerably mild,
 To make a wash would hardly stew a child,
 Has ev'n been prov'd to grant a lover's pray'r ; 55
 And paid a tradesman once to make him stare ;
 Gave alms at Easter in a Christian trim,
 And made a widow happy for a whim.
 Why then declare good-nature is her scorn,
 When 'tis by that alone she can be borne ? 60

Why pique all mortals, yet affect a name,
 A fool to pleasure, yet a slave to fame ?
 Now deep in Taylor and the Book of Martyrs,
 Now drinking citron with his Grace and Chartres :
 Now conscience chills her, and now passion burns,
 And atheism and religion take their turns ; 66
 A very Heathen in the carnal part,
 Yet still a sad good Christian at her heart.

See sin in state, majestically drunk,
 Proud as a peeress, prouder as a punk : 70
 Chaste to her husband, frank to all beside ;
 A teeming mistress, but a barren bride.
 What then ? let blood and body bear the fault,
 Her head's untouch'd, that noble seat of thought :
 Such this day's doctrine---in another fit 75
 She sins with poets through pure love of wit.

What has not fir'd her bosom or her brain ?
 Cæsar and Tallboy, Charles and Charlemagne.
 As Helluo, late dictator of the feast,
 The nose of haut-goût, and the tip of taste, 80
 Critiqu'd your wine, and analyz'd your meat,
 Yet on plain pudding deign'd at home to eat ;
 So Philomédé, lecturing all mankind
 On the soft passion, and the taste refin'd,
 Th' address, the delicacy---stoops at once, 85
 And makes her hearty meal upon a dunce.

Flavia's a wit, has too much sense to pray ;
 To toast our wants and wishes is her way ;

Nor asks of God, but of her stars, to give
The mighty blessing, "while we live to live." 90

Then all for death, that opiate of the soul!
Lucretia's dagger, Rosamonda's bowl.

Say, what can cause such impotence of mind?
A spark too fickle, or a spouse too kind.
Wise wretch! with pleasures too refin'd to please;
With too much spirit to be e'er at ease; 96

With too much quickness ever to be taught;
With too much thinking to have common thought;
You purchase pain with all that joy can give,
And die of nothing but a rage to live. 109

Turn then from wits, and look on Simo's mate;
No ass so meek, no ass so obstinate:
Or her that owns her faults, but never mends,
Because she's honest and the best of friends:

Or her whose life the church and scandal share, 105
For ever in a passion or a pray'r:

Or her who laughs at hell, but (like her Grace)
Cries, "Ah! how charming if there's no such place!"

Or who in sweet vicissitude appears
Of mirth and opium, ratifie and tears, 110

The daily anodyne and nightly draught,
To kill those foes to fair ones, time and thought.

Woman and fool are too hard things to hit;
For true no-meaning puzzles more than wit.

But what are these to great Atossa's mind? 115
Scarce once herself, by turns all womankind!

Who with herself, or others, from her birth,
Finds all her life one warfare upon earth;

Shines in exposing knaves and painting fools,
Yet is whate'er she hates and ridicules; 120

No thought advances, but her eddy brain
Whisks it about, and down it goes again.

Full sixty years the world has been her trade;
The wisest fool much time has ever made;

From loveless youth to unrespected age, 125
No passion gratified, except her rage:

So much the fury still outran the wit,
The pleasure miss'd her and the scandal hit.

Who breaks with her provokes revenge from hell,
 But he's a bolder man who dares be well. 130
 Her every turn with violence pursued,
 Nor more a storm her hate than gratitude:
 To that each passion turns or soon or late;
 Love, if it makes her yield, must make her hate.
 Superiors?—death! and equals?—what a curse!
 But an inferior not dependent?—worse. 136
 Offend her, and she knows not to forgive;
 Oblige her, and she'll hate you while you live;
 But die, and she'll adore you—then the bust
 And temple rise—then fall again to dust. 140
 Last night her lord was all that's good and great;
 A knave this morning, and his will a cheat.
 Strange! by the means defeated of the ends,
 By spirit robb'd of pow'r, by warmth of friends,
 By wealth of followers! without one distress, 145
 Sick of herself through very selfishness!
 Atossa, curs'd with every granted pray'r.
 Childless with all her children, wants an heir;
 To heirs unknown descends th' unguarded store,
 Or wanders, Heav'n-directed, to the poor. 150
 Pictures like these, dear madam! to design,
 Asks no firm hand and no unerring line;
 Some wandering touches, some reflected light,
 Some flying stroke, alone can hit them right:
 For how should equal colours do the knack? 155
 Cameleons who can paint in white and black?
 “Yet Chloe sure was form'd without a spot.”—
 Nature in her then err'd not, but forgot.
 “With every pleasing, every prudent part,
 Say, what can Chloe want?”—She wants a heart.
 She speaks, behaves, and acts, just as she ought, 161
 But never, never, reach'd one generous thought.
 Virtue she finds too painful an endeavour,
 Content to dwell in decencies for ever.
 So very reasonable, so unmov'd, 165
 As never yet to love or to be lov'd.
 She, while her lover pants upon her breast,
 Can mark the figures on an Indian chest;

And when she sees her friend in deep despair,
Observes how much a chintz exceeds mohair. 170

Forbid it, Heav'n! a favour or a debt
She e'er should cancel! but she may forget.

Safe is your secret still in Chloe's ear;

But none of Chloe's shall you ever hear.

Of all her dears she never slander'd one, 175

But cares not if a thousand are undone.

Would Chloe know if you're alive or dead?

She bids her footman put it in her head.

Chloe is prudent---Would you too be wise?

Then never break your heart when Chloe dies. 180

One certain portrait may (I grant) be seen,

Which Heav'n has varnish'd out, and made a queen;

The same for ever! and describ'd by all

With truth and goodness as with crown and hall.

Poets heap virtues, painters gems, at will, 185

And shew their zeal, and hide their want of skill.

'Tis well---but, artists! who can paint or write,

To draw the naked is your true delight.

That robe of quality so struts and swells,

None see what parts of Nature it conceals: 190

Th' exactest traits of body or of mind

We owe to models of an humble kind.

If Queensberry to strip there's no compelling,

'Tis from a handmaid we must take a Helen.

From peer or bishop 'tis no easy thing 195

To draw the man who loves his God or king.

Alas! I copy (or my draught would fail)

From honest Mah'met or plain Parson Hale.

But grant in public men sometimes are shown,

A woman's seen in private life alone: 200

Our bolder talents in full light display'd,

Your virtues open fairest in the shade.

Bred to disguise, in public 'tis you hide;

There none distinguish 'twixt your shame or pride,

Weakness or delicacy; all so nice, 20

That each may seem a virtue or a vice.

In men we various ruling passions find;

In women two almost divide the kind;

Those only fix'd they first or last obey,
The love of pleasure and the love of sway. 210

That Nature gives; and where the lesson taught
Is but to please, can pleasure seem a fault?
Experience this: by man's oppression curst,
They seek the second not to lose the first.

Men some to business, some to pleasure take; 215
But every woman is at heart a rake:
Men some to quiet, some to public strife,
But every lady would be queen for life.

Yet mark the fate of a whole sex of queens!
Pow'r ail their end, but beauty all the means. 220
In youth they conquer with so wild a rage
As leaves them scarce a subject in their age:
For foreign glory, foreign joy, they roam;
No thought of peace or happiness at home.
But wisdom's science is well-tim'd retreat, 225
As hard a science to the fair as great!

Beauties, like tyrants, old and friendless grown,
Yet hate repose, and dread to be alone;
Worn out in public, weary every eye,
Nor leave one sigh behind them when they die. 230

Pleasures the sex, as children birds, pursue,
Still out of reach, yet never out of view;
Sure if they catch to spoil the toy at most,
To covet flying, and regret when lost:
At last to follies youth could scarce defend, 235
It grows their age's prudence to pretend;
Asham'd to own they gave delight before,
Reduc'd to feign it, when they give no more.
As hags hold sabbaths less for joy than spite,
So these their merry miserable night; 240
Still round and round the ghosts of beauty glide,
And haunt the places where their honour died.

See how the world its veterans rewards!
A youth of frolics, an old age of cards;
Fair to no purpose, artful to no end. 245
Young without lovers, old without a friend;
A sop their passion, but their prize a sot,
Alive ridiculous, and dead forgot!

Ah! friend! to dazzle let the vain design;
To raise the thought and touch the heart be thine!
That charm shall grow, while what fatigues the
ring

Flaunts and goes down an unregarded thing.
So, when the sun's broad beam has tir'd the sight,
All mild ascends the moon's more sober light,
Serene in virgin modesty she shines,
And unobserv'd the glaring orb declines.

Oh! bless'd with temper, whose unclouded ray
Can make to-morrow cheerful as to-day;
She who can love a sister's charms, or hear
Sighs for a daughter with unwounded ear; 260
She who ne'er answers till a husband cools,
Or if she rules him never shews she rules;
Charms by accepting, by submitting sways,
Yet has her humour most when she obeys;
Let fops or fortune fly which way they will, 265
Disdains all loss of tickets or codille;
Spleen, vapours, or small-pox, above them all,
And mistress of herself though china fall.

And yet, believe me, good as well as ill,
Woman's at best a contradiction still. 270
Heav'n, when it strives to polish all it can,
It's last best work, but forms a softer man;
Picks from each sex, to make the favourite blest,
Your love of pleasure, our desire of rest;
Blends, in exception to all general rules, 275
Your taste of follies with our scorn of fools;
Reserve with frankness, art with truth allied.
Courage with softness, modesty with pride;
Fix'd principles, with fancy ever new,
Shakes all together, and produces—you. 280

Be this a woman's fame; with this unblest
Toasts live a scorn, and queens may die a jest.
This Phœbus promis'd (I forget the year)
When those blue eyes first open'd on the sphere:
Ascendant Phœbus watch'd that hour with care, 285
Averted half your parent's simple pray'r.

And gave you beauty, but denied the pelf
 That buys your sex a tyrant o'er itself.
 The generous god, who wit and gold refines,
 And ripens spirits as he ripens mines, 290
 Kept dross for duchesses, (the world shall know it)
 To you gave sense, good humour, and a poet.

EPISTLE III.

TO ALLEN LORD BATHURST.

OF THE USE OF RICHES.

ARGUMENT.

That it is known to few, most falling into one of the extremes, avarice or profusion, v. 1, &c. The point discussed, whether the invention of money has been more commodious or pernicious to mankind, v. 21---77. That riches, either to the avaricious or the prodigal, cannot afford happiness, scarcely necessities, v. 89---160. That avarice is an absolute frenzy, without an end or purpose, v. 113---152. Conjectures about the motives of avaricious men, v. 121---153. That the conduct of men with respect to riches, can only be accounted for by the order of Providence, which works the general good out of extremes, and brings all to its great end, by perpetual revolutions, v. 161---178. How a miser acts upon principles which appear to him reasonable, v. 179. How a prodgal does the same, v. 199. The due medium and true use of riches, v. 219. The Man of Ross, v. 250. The fate of the profuse and the covetous, in two examples; both miserable in life and in death, v. 300, &c. The story of Sir Balaam, v. 339, &c.

P. **W**HO shall decide when doctors disagree,
 And soundest casuists doubt, like you and me?
 You hold the word from Jove to Momus giv'n,
 That man was made the standing jest of Heav'n,
 And gold but sent to keep the fools in play, 5
 For some to heap and some to throw away.

But I, who think more highly of our kind,
 (And surely Heav'n and I are of a mind)
 Opine that Nature, as in duty bound,
 Deep hid the shining mischief under ground: 10
 But when by man's audacious labour won,
 Flam'd forth this rival to its sire the sun,
 Then careful Heav'n supplied two sorts of men,
 To squander these, and those to hide again.

Like doctors thus, when much dispute has past, 15
 We find our tenets just the same at last;

Both fairly owning riches, in effect,
 No grace of Heav'n, or token of th' elect;
 Giv'n to the fool, the mad, the vain, the evil,
 To Ward, to Waters, Chartres, and the devil. 20

B. What Nature wants commodious gold bestows;
 'Tis thus we eat the bread another sows.

P. But how unequal it bestows observe;
 'Tis thus we riot while who sow it starve:
 What nature wants (a phrase I much distrust) 25
 Extends to luxury, extends to lust:

Useful I grant, it serves what life requires,
 But dreadful too, the dark assassin hires.

B. Trade it may help, society extend.

P. But lures the pirate, and corrupts the friend.

B. It raises armies in a nation's aid. 31

P. But bribe's a senate, and the land's betray'd.
 In vain may heroes fight, and patriots rave,
 If secret gold sap on from knave to knave.
 Once, we confess, beneath the patriot's cloak 35
 From the crack'd bag the dropping guinea spoke,
 And jingling down the back stairs, told the crew,
 "Old Cato is as great a rogue as you."

Bless'd paper credit! last and best supply!
 That lends corruption lighter wings to fly! 40

Gold imp'd by thee can compass hardest things,
 Can pocket states, can fetch or carry kings;

A single leaf shall waft an army o'er,
 Or ship off senates to some distant shore;
 A leaf, like Sibyl's, scatter to and fro 45

Our fates and fortunes as the wind shall blow;
 Pregnant with thousands flits the scrap unseen,
 And silent sells a king or buys a queen.

Oh! that such bulky bribes as all might see
 Still, as of old, incumber'd villainy! 50

Could France or Rome divert our brave designs
 With all their brandies or with all their wines?

What could they more than knights and 'squires
 confound,

Or water all the quorum ten miles round?

A statesman's slumbers how this speech would spoil!
 "Sir, Spain has sent a thousand jars of oil; 56
 Huge bales of British cloth blockade the door;
 A hundred oxen at your levee roar."

Poor Avarice one torment more would find,
 Nor could Profusion squander all in kind: 60
 Astride his cheese Sir Morgan might we meet,
 And Worldly crying coals from street to street,
 Whom with a wig so wild, and mien so maz'd
 Pity mistakes for some poor tradesman craz'd.
 Had Colepepper's whole wealth been hops and hogs,
 Could he himself have sent it to the dogs? 66
 His Grace will game; to White's a bull be led,
 With spurning heels and with a butting head:
 To White's be carried, as to ancient games,
 Fair coursers, vases, and alluring dames. 70
 Shall then Uxorio, if the stakes he sweep,
 Bear home six whores, and make his lady weep?
 Or soft Adonis, so perfum'd and fine,
 Drive to St. James's a whole herd of swine?
 Oh! filthy check on all industrious skill, 75
 To spoil the nation's last great trade, quadrille!
 Since then, my lord, on such a world we fall,
 What say you? *B.* Say? Why, take it gold and all.

P. What riches give us let us then inquire:
 Meat, fire, and clothes. *B.* What more? *P.* Meat,
 clothes, and fire. 80

Is this too little? would you more than live?
 Alas! 'tis more than Turner finds they give;
 Alas! 'tis more than (all his visions past)
 Unhappy Wharton, waking, found at last!
 What can they give? To dying Hopkins heirs? 85
 To Chartres vigour? Japhet nose and ears?
 Can they in gems bid pallid Hippia glow?
 In Fulvia's buckle ease the throbs below?
 Or heal, old Narses, thy obscener ail,
 With all th' embroidery plaister'd at thy tail? 90
 They might (were Harpax not too wise to spend)
 Give Harpax' self the blessing of a friend;

Or find some doctor that would save the life
Of wretched Shylock, spite of Shylock's wife.
But thousands die without or this or that,
Die, and endow a college or a cat. 95

To some indeed Heav'n grants the happier fate
T' enrich a bastard, or a son they hate.

Perhaps you think the poor might have their part:
Bond damns the poor, and hates them from his
heart. 100

The grave Sir Gilbert holds it for a rule,
That every man in want is knave or fool.
"God cannot love (says Blunt, with tearless eyes)
The wretch he starves"—and piously denies:

But the good bishop, with a meeker air, 105
Admits and leaves them Providence's care.

Yet to be just to these poor men of pelf,
Each does but hate his neighbour as himself.
Damn'd to the mines, an equal fate betides,
The slave that digs it and the slave that hides. 110

B. Who suffers thus, mere charity should own,
Must act on motives powerful though unknown.

P. Some war, some plague or famine, they foresee,
Some revelation hid from you and me.

Why Shylock wants a meal the cause is found; 115
He thinks a loaf will rise to fifty pound.

What made Directors cheat in South-sea year?
To live on ven'son when it sold so dear.

Ask you why Phryne the whole auction buys?
Phryne foresees a general excise. 120

Why she and Sappho raise that monstrous sum?
Alas! they fear a man will cost a plum.

Wise Peter sees the world's respect for gold,
And therefore hopes this nation may be sold.
Glorious ambition! Peter, swell thy store, 125
And be what Rome's great Didius was before.

The crown of Poland, venal twice an age,
To just three millions stinted modest Gage.
But nobler scenes Maria's dreams unfold,
Hereditary realms, and worlds of gold. 130

Congenial souls! whose life one avarice joins,
And one fate buries in th' Asturian mines.

Much injur'd Blunt! why bears he Britain's hate?
A wizard told him in these words our fate:

"At length corruption, like a general flood, 135

(So long by watchful ministers withstood)

Shall deluge all: and avarice creeping on,
Spread like a low-born mist and blot the sun;

Statesman and patriot ply alike the stocks,

Peeress and butler share alike the box, 140

And judges job, and bishops bite the town,

And mighty dukes pack cards for half a crown:

See Britain sunk in lucre's sordid charms,

And France reveng'd of Anne's and Edward's arms!"

'Twas no court badge, great scriv'ner! fir'd thy
brain, 145

Nor lordly luxury, nor city gain:

No, 'twas thy righteous end, asham'd to see

Senates degenerate, patriots disagree,

And nobly wishing party-rage to cease,

To buy both sides, and give thy country peace. 150

"All this is madness," cries a sober sage:

But who, my friend, has reason in his rage?

"The ruling passion, be it what it will,

The ruling passion conquers reason still."

Less mad the wildest whimsy we can frame, 155

Than ev'n that passion if it has no aim;

For though such motives folly you may call,

The folly's greater to have none at all.

Hear then the truth: "'Tis Heav'n each passion
sends,

And different men directs to different ends. 160

Extremes in nature equal good produce;

Extremes in man concur to general use."

Ask we what makes one keep and one bestow?

That pow'r who bids the ocean ebb and flow,

Bids seed-time, harvest, equal course maintain 165

Through reconcil'd extremes of drought and rain;

Builds life on death, on change duration founds,

And gives th' eternal wheels to know their rounds.

Riches, like insects, when conceal'd they lie,
Wait but for wings, and in their season fly. 170

Who sees pale Mammon pine amidst his store,
Sees but a backward steward for the poor;
This year a reservoir to keep and spare,
The next a fountain spouting through his heir,
In lavish streams to quench a country's thirst, 175
And men and dogs shall drink him till they burst.

Old Cotta sham'd his fortune and his birth,
Yet was not Cotta void of wit or worth:
What though (the use of barbarous spits forgot)
His kitchen vied in coolness with his grot? 180

His court with nettles, moats with cresses stor'd,
With soups unbought, and sallads, bless'd his board?
If Cotta liv'd on pulse, it was no more
Than bramins, saints, and sages, did before:
To cram the rich was prodigal expence; 185

And who would take the poor from Providence?
Like some lone chartreux stands the good old hall,
Silence without, and fasts within the wall;
No rafter'd roofs with dance and tabor sound,
No noontide bell invites the country round; 190

Tenants with sighs the smokeless tow'rs survey,
And turn th' unwilling steeds another way;
Benighted wanderers the forest o'er
Curse the sav'd candle and unopening door;
While the gaunt mastiff, growling at the gate, 195
Affrights the beggar whom he longs to eat.

Not so his son; he mark'd this oversight,
And then mistook reverse of wrong for right:
(For what to shun will no great knowledge need,
But what to follow is a task indeed!) 200

Yet sure of qualities deserving praise,
More go to ruin fortunes than to raise.
What slaughter'd hecatombs, what floods of wine,
Fill the capacious 'squire and deep divine!
Yet no mean motive this profusion draws; 205

His oxen perish in his country's cause;
'Tis George and Liberty that crowns the cup,
And zeal for that great house which eats him up.

The woods recede around the naked seat,
 The sylvans groan—no matter—for the fleet: 210
 Next goes his wool—to clothe our valiant bands;
 Last, for his country's love, he sells his lands.
 To town he comes, completes the nation's hope,
 And heads the bold trainbands, and burns a pope.
 And shall not Britain now reward his toils, 215
 Britain! that pays her patriots with her spoils?
 In vain at court the bankrupt pleads his cause;
 His thankless country leaves him to her laws.

The sense to value riches, with the art
 T' enjoy them, and the virtue to impart, 220
 Not meanly nor ambitiously pursued,
 Not sunk by sloth, nor rais'd by servitude;
 To balance fortune by a just expence,
 Join with economy magnificence;
 With splendour charity, with plenty health, 225
 Oh, teach us, Bathurst! yet unspoil'd by wealth!
 That secret rare, between the extremes to move
 Of mad good-nature, and of mean self-love.

B. To worth or want well-weigh'd be bounty giv'n,
 And ease or emulate the care of Heav'n; 230
 (Whose measure full o'erflows on human race)
 Mend fortune's fault, and justify her grace.
 Wealth in the gross is death, but life diffus'd,
 As poison heals in just proportion us'd:
 In heaps like ambergris, a stink it lies, 235
 But well dispers'd, is incense to the skies.

P. Who starves by nobles, or with nobles eats?
 The wretch that trusts them, and the rogue that
 cheats.

Is there a lord who knows a chearful noon,
 Without a fiddler, flatterer, or buffoon? 240
 Whose table wit or modest merit share,
 Unelbow'd by a gamester, pimp, or play'r?
 Who copies your's or Oxford's better part,
 To ease th' oppress'd, and raise the sinking heart?
 Where'er he shines, O Fortune! gild the scene, 245
 And angels guard him in the golden mean!

There English bounty yet awhile may stand,
And honour linger ere it leaves the land.

But all our praises why should lords engross?
Rise, honest Muse! and sing the Man of Ross: 250
Pleas'd Vaga echoes through her winding bounds,
And rapid Severn hoarse applause resounds.

Who hung with woods yon mountain's sultry brow?
From the dry rock who bade the waters flow?
Not to the skies in useless columns tost, 255

Or in proud falls magnificently lost,
But clear and artless, pouring through the plain
Health to the sick, and solace to the swain.

Whose causeway parts the vale with shady rows?
Whose seats the weary traveller repose? 260

Who taught that Heav'n-directed spire to rise?
"The Man of Ross," each lisping babe replies.

Behold the market-place with poor o'erspread!
The Man of Ross divides the weekly bread:

He feeds yon almshouse, neat, but void of state, 265
Where age and want sit smiling at the gate:

Him portion'd maids, apprentic'd orphans, blest,
The young who labour, and the old who rest.

Is any sick? the Man of Ross relieves,
Prescribes, attends, the med'cine makes and gives.

Is there a variance? enter but his door, 271
Baulk'd are the courts, and contest is no more:

Despairing quacks with curses fled the place,
And vile attornies, now an useless race.

B. Thrice happy man! enabled to pursue 275
What all so wish, but want the pow'r to do!

Oh, say, what sums that generous hand supply?
What mines to swell that boundless charity?

P. Of debts and taxes, wife and children, clear,
This man possessed—five hundred pounds a year. 280

Blush, grandeur, blush! proud courts, withdraw
your blaze;

Ye little stars! hide your diminish'd rays.

B. And what? no monument, inscription, stone,
His race, his form, his name, almost unknown?

P. Who builds a church to God, and not to fame,
 Will never mark the marble with his name: 286
 Go, search it there, where to be born and die,
 Of rich and poor makes all the history;
 Enough that virtue fill'd the space between,
 Prov'd by the ends of being to have been. 290
 When Hopkins dies, a thousand lights attend
 The wretch who living sav'd a candle's end:
 Shouldering God's altar a vile image stands,
 Belies his features, nay, extends his hands;
 That live-long wig, which Gorgon's self might own,
 Eternal buckle takes in Parian stone. 296
 Behold what blessings wealth to life can lend!
 And see what comfort it affords our end!

In the worst inn's worst room, with mat half-hung,
 The floors of plaster, and the walls of dung, 300
 On once a flock-bed, but repair'd with straw,
 With tape-tied curtains, never meant to draw,
 The George and Garter dangling from that bed,
 Where tawdry yellow strove with dirty red,
 Great Villiers lies---alas! how chang'd from him, 305
 That life of pleasure and that soul of whim!
 Gallant and gay, in Cliveden's proud alcove,
 The bow'r of wanton Shrewsbury and love;
 Or just as gay at council, in a ring
 Of mimic statesmen and their merry king. 310
 No wit to flatter, left of all his store!
 No fool to laugh at, which he valued more.
 There, victor of his health, of fortune, friends,
 And fame, this lord of useless thousands ends!

His grace's fate sage Cutler could foresee, 315
 And well (he thought) advis'd him, "Live like me."
 As well his grace replied, "Like you, Sir John?
 'That I can do when all I have is gone!'"
 Resolve me, reason, which of these is worse,
 Want with a full or with an empty purse? 320
 Thy life more wretched, Cutler, was confess'd;
 Arise, and tell me, was thy death more bless'd?
 Cutler saw tenants break and houses fall;
 For very want he could not build a wall.

His only daughter in a stranger's power ; 325
For very want he could not pay a dower.

A few grey hairs his reverend temples crown'd ;
'Twas very want that sold them for two pound.
What! ev'n denied a cordial at his end,
Banish'd the doctor, and expell'd the friend? 330

What but a want, which you perhaps think mad,
Yet numbers feel---the want of what he had!

Cutler and Brutus dying both exclaim,
" Virtue! and wealth! what are ye but a name!"

Say, for such worth are other worlds prepar'd? 335
Or are they both in this their own reward?

A knotty point! to which we now proceed.

But you are tir'd---I'll tell a tale---*B.* Agreed.

P. Where London's column, pointing at the skies,
Like a tall bully, lifts the head and lies, 340

There dwelt a citizen of sober fame,
A plain good man, and Balaam was his name;
Religious, punctual, frugal, and so forth;
His word would pass for more than he was worth.
One solid dish his week-day meal affords, 345

An added pudding solemniz'd the Lord's:
Constant at church and 'Change; his gains were sure;
His givings rare, save farthings to the poor.

The devil was piqu'd such saintship to behold,
And long'd to tempt him like good Job of old; 350
But Satan now is wiser than of yore,

And tempts by making rich, not making poor:

Rous'd by the prince of air, the whirlwinds sweep
The surge, and plunge his father in the deep;
Then full against his Cornish lands they roar, 355
And two rich shipwrecks bless the lucky shore.

Sir Balaam now, he lives like other folks,
He takes his chirping pint and cracks his jokes.
" Live like yourself," was soon my lady's word;
And lo! two puddings smok'd upon the board. 360

Asleep and naked as an Indian lay,
An honest factor stole a gem away:
He pledg'd it to the knight; the knight had wit,
So kept the diamond, and the rogue was bit.

Some scruple rose, but thus he eas'd his thought,
"I'll now give sixpence where I gave a groat; 366
Where once I went to church I'll now go twice—
And am so clear too of all other vice;"

The tempter saw his time, the work he plied;
Stocks and subscriptions pour on ev'ry side, 370
Till all the dæmon makes his full descent
In one abundant shower of cent per cent,
Sinks deep within him, and possesses whole,
Then dubs director, and secures his soul.

Behold Sir Balaam, now a man of spirit, 375
Ascribes his gettings to his parts and merit;
What late he called a blessing now was wit,
And God's good Providence a lucky hit.
Things change their titles as our manners turn;
His compting-house employ'd the Sunday morn: 380
Seldom at church ('twas such a busy life)
But duly sent his family and wife.

There (so the devil ordain'd) one Christmas-tide
My good old lady catch'd a cold and died.

A nymph of quality admires our knight; 385
He marries, bows at court, and grows polite;
Leaves the dull cits, and joins (to please the fair)
The well-bred cuckolds in St. James's air:
First for his son a gay commission buys,
Who drinks, whores, fights, and in a duel dies: 390
His daughter flaunts a viscount's tawdry wife;
She bears a coronet and p--x for life.

In Britain's senate he a seat obtains,
And one more pensioner St. Stephen gains.
My lady falls to play; so bad her chance, 395
He must repair it; takes a bribe from France:
The house impeach him; Coningsby harangues;
The court forsake him, and Sir Balaam hangs.
Wife, son, and daughter, Satan! are thy own;
His wealth, yet dearer, forfeit to the crown: 400
The devil and the king divide the prize;
And sad Sir Balaam curses God and dies.

EPISTLE IV.

TO RICHARD BOYLE, EARL OF BURLINGTON.

OF THE USE OF RICHES.

ARGUMENT.

The vanity of expence in people of wealth and quality. The abuse of the word Taste, v. 13. That the first principle and foundation in this, as in every thing else, is good sense, v. 40. The chief proof of it is to follow Nature, even in works of mere luxury and elegance. Instanced in architecture and gardening, where all must be adapted to the genius and use of the place, and the beauties not forced into it, but resulting from it, v. 50. How men are disappointed in their most expensive undertakings for want of this true foundation, without which nothing can please long, if at all; and the best examples and rules will be but perverted into something burthensome and ridiculous, v. 65--92. A description of the false taste of magnificence; the first grand error of which is to imagine that greatness consists in the size and dimension, instead of the proportion and harmony of the whole, v. 97; and the second, either in joining together parts incoherent, or too minutely resembling, or in the repetition of the same too frequently, v. 105, &c. A word or two of false taste in books, in music, in painting, even in preaching and prayer; and lastly, in entertainments, v. 133, &c. Yet Providence is justified in giving wealth to be squandered in this manner, since it is dispersed to the poor and laborious part of mankind, v. 169. [recurring to what is laid down in the first book, ep. ii. and in the epistle preceding this, v. 159, &c.] What are the proper objects of magnificence, and a proper field for the expence of great men, v. 177, &c. and, finally, the great and public works which become a prince, v. 191, &c.

'Tis strange the miser should his cares employ
To gain those riches he can ne'er enjoy:
Is it less strange the prodigal should waste
His wealth to purchase what he ne'er can taste?
Not for himself he sees, or hears, or eats; 5
Artists must choose his pictures, music, meats:
He buys for Topham drawings and designs;
For Pembroke statues, dirty gods, and coins;
Rare monkish manuscripts for Hearne alone,
And books for Mead, and butterflies for Sloane. 10
Think we all these are for himself? no more
Than his fine wife, alas! or finer whore.

For what has Virro painted, built, and planted?
Only to shew how many tastes he wanted.
What brought Sir Visto's ill-got wealth to waste? 15
Some dæmon whispered, "Visto! have a taste."
Heav'n visits with a taste the wealthy fool,
And needs no rod but Ripley with a rule.

See! sportive fate, to punish aukward pride,
Bids Bubo build, and sends him such a guide: 20
A standing sermon at each year's expence,
That never coxcomb reach'd magnificence!

You shew us Rome was glorious, not profuse,
And pompous buildings once were things of use;
Yet shall, my lord, your just, your noble rules 25
Fill half the land with imitating fools,
Who random drawings from your sheets shall take,
And of one beauty many blunders make;
Load some vain church with old theatric state,
Turn arcs of triumph to a garden-gate; 30
Reverse your ornaments, and hang them all
On some patch'd doghole ek'd with ends of wall;
Then clap four slices of pilaster on't,
That lac'd with bits of rustic makes a front;
Shall call the winds through long arcades to roar. 35
Proud to catch cold at a Venetian door;
Conscious they act a true Palladian part,
And if they starve they starve by rules of art.

Oft have you hinted to your brother peer
A certain truth, which many buy too dear: 40
Something there is more needful than expence,
And something previous ev'n to taste---'tis sense;
Good sense, which only is the gift of Heaven,
And though no science, fairly worth the seven;
A light which in yourself you must perceive; 45
Jones and Le Nôtre have it not to give.

To build, to plant, whatever you intend,
To rear the column, or the arch to bend,
To swell the terrace, or to sink the grot,
In all let nature never be forgot; 50
But treat the goddess like a modest fair,
Nor over-dress, nor leave her wholly bare;
Let not each beauty every where be spied,
Where half the skill is decently to hide.
He gains all points who pleasingly confounds, 55
Surprises, varies, and conceals the bounds.

Consult the genius of the place in all,
That tells the waters or to rise or fall;

Or helps th' ambitious hill the heav'ns to scale,
 Or scoops in circling theatres the vale ; 60
 Calls in the country, catches opening glades,
 Joins willing woods, and varies shades from shades ;
 Now breaks, or now directs, th' intending lines,
 Paints as you plant, and as you work designs.

Still follow sense, of every art the soul, 65
 Parts answering parts shall slide into a whole,
 Spontaneous beauties all around advance,
 Start ev'n from difficulty, strike from chance:
 Nature shall join you ; time shall make it grow
 A work to wonder at---perhaps a Stow. 70

Without it, proud Versailles ! thy glory falls,
 And Nero's terraces desert their walls :
 The vast parterres a thousand hands shall make,
 Lo ! Cobham comes, and floats them with a lake :
 Or cut wide views through mountains to the plain, 75
 You'll wish your hill or shelter'd seat again.
 Ev'n in an ornament its place remark,
 Nor in an hermitage set Dr. Clarke.

Behold Villario's ten years' toil complete,
 His quincunx darkens, his espaliers meet, 80
 The wood supports the plain, the parts unite,
 And strength of shade contends with strength of light ;
 A waving glow the bloomy beds display,
 Blushing in bright diversities of day,
 With silver-quivering rills meander'd o'er--- 85
 Enjoy them you ! Villario can no more:
 Tir'd of the scene parterres and fountains yield,
 He finds at last he better likes a field.

Through his young woods how pleas'd Sabinus
 stray'd,
 Or sat delighted in the thickening shade, 90
 With annual joy the reddening shoots to greet,
 Or see the stretching branches long to meet !
 His son's fine taste an opener visto loves,
 Foe to the Dryads of his father's groves ;
 One boundless green or flourish'd carpet views, 95
 With all the mournful family of yews ;

The thriving plants, ignoble broomsticks made,
Now sweep those alleys they were born to shade.

At Timon's villa let us pass a day;
Where all cry out, "What sums are thrown away!"
So proud, so grand; of that stupendous air 101
Soft and agreeable come never there.

Greatness with Timon dwells in such a draught
As brings all Brobdignag before your thought.
To compass this his building is a town, 105
His pond an ocean, his parterre a down:
Who but must laugh, the master when he sees,
A puny insect shivering at a breeze!

Lo, what huge heaps of littleness around!
The whole a labour'd quarry above ground, 110
Two Cupids squirt before; a lake behind
Improves the keenness of the northern wind.

His gardens next your admiration call;
On every side you look, behold the wall!
No pleasing intricacies intervene, 115
No artful wildness to perplex the scene;
Grove nods at grove, each alley has a brother,
And half the platform just reflects the other.

The suffering eye inverted nature sees,
Trees cut to statues, statues thick as trees; 120
With here a fountain never to be play'd,
And there a summer-house that knows no shade;
Here Amphitrite sails through myrtle bowers;
There gladiators fight or die in flowers;
Unwater'd see the drooping sea-horse mourn, 125
And swallows roost in Nilus' dusty urn.

My lord advances with majestic mien,
Smit with the mighty pleasure to be seen:
But soft---by regular approach---not yet---
First through the length of yon hot terrace sweat; 130
And when up ten steep slopes you've dragg'd your
thighs,

Just at his study-door he'll bless vour eyes.

His study! with what authors is it stor'd?
In books, not authors, curious is my lord;

To all their dated backs he turns you round ; 135
 These Aldus printed, those Du Sueil has bound !
 Lo, some are vellum, and the rest as good,
 For all his lordship knows, but they are wood !
 For Locke or Milton 'tis in vain to look ;
 These shelves admit not any modern book. 140

And now the chapel's silver bell you hear,
 That summons you to all the pride of prayer:
 Light quirks of music, broken and uneven,
 Make the soul dance upon a jig to Heaven.
 On painted ceilings you devoutly stare, 145
 Where sprawl the saints of Verrio or Laguerre,
 Or gilded clouds in fair expansion lie,
 And bring all Paradise before your eye.
 To rest the cushion and soft dean invite,
 Who never mentions hell to ears polite. 150

But, hark ! the chiming clocks to dinner call ;
 A hundred footsteps scrape the marble hall :
 The rich buffet well-colour'd serpents grace,
 And, gaping Tritons spew to wash your face.
 Is this a dinner? this a genial room? 155
 No, 'tis a temple and a hecatomb ;
 A solemn sacrifice perform'd in state ;
 You drink by measure, and to minutes eat.
 So quick retires each flying course, you'd swear
 Sancho's dread doctor and his wand were there. 160
 Between each act the trembling salvers ring,
 From soup to sweet wine, and God bless the King.
 In plenty starving, tantaliz'd in state,
 And complaisantly help'd to all I hate,
 Treated, caress'd, and tir'd, I take my leave, 165
 Sick of his civil pride from morn to eve:
 I curse such lavish cost and little skill,
 And swear no day was ever past so ill.

Yet hence the poor are cloth'd, the hungry fed ;
 Health to himself, and to his infants bread 170
 The labourer bears ; what his hard heart denies
 His charitable vanity supplies.

Another age shall see the golden ear
 Embrown the slope, and nod on the parterre ;

Deep harvests bury all his pride has plann'd, 175
And laughing Ceres reassume the land.

Who then shall grace, or who improve the soil?
Who plants like Bathurst, or who builds like Boyle?
'Tis use alone that sanctifies expence,
And splendour borrows all her rays from sense. 180

His father's acres who enjoys in peace,
Or makes his neighbours glad if he increase;
Whose cheerful tenants bless their yearly toil,
Yet to their lord owe more than to the soil;
Whose ample lawns are not asham'd to feed 185
The milky heifer and deserving steed;
Whose rising forests not for pride or shew,
But future buildings, future navies grow;
Let his plantations stretch from down to down,
First shade a country, and then raise a town. 190

You too proceed! make falling arts your care,
Erect new wonders, and the old repair;
Jones and Palladio to themselves restore,
And be whate'er Vitruvius was before:
Till kings call forth th' ideas of your mind, 195
(Proud to accomplish what such hands design'd)
Bid harbours open, public ways extend,
Bid temples worthier of the God ascend;
Bid the broad arch the dangerous flood contain,
The mole projected break the roaring main; 200
Back to his bounds their subject sea command,
And roll obedient rivers through the land:
These honours Peace to happy Britain brings;
'These are imperial works, and worthy kings. 204



TRANSLATIONS AND IMITATIONS.

ADVERTISEMENT.

The following Translations were selected from many others done by the author in his youth; for the most part but a sort of exercises, while he was improving himself in the languages, and carried, by his early bent to poetry, to perform them rather in verse than prose. Mr. Dryden's Fables came out about that time, which occasioned the Translations from Chaucer. They were first separately printed in miscellanies by J. Tonson and B. Lintot, and afterwards collected in the Quarto Edition of 1717. The Imitations of English Authors were done as early, some of them at fourteen or fifteen years old. P.

THE THEBAIS OF STATIUS. BOOK I.

TRANSLATED IN THE YEAR 1703.

ARGUMENT.

Ædipus, king of Thebes, having by mistake slain his father Laius, and married his mother Jocasta, put out his own eyes, and resigned his realm to his sons Eteocles and Polynices. Being neglected by them, he makes his prayer to the fury Tisiphone to sow debate betwixt the brothers. They agree at last to reign singly, each a year by turns, and the first lot is obtained by Eteocles. Jupiter, in a council of the gods, declares his resolution of punishing the Thebans, and Argives also, by means of a marriage between Polynices and one of the daughters of Adrastus, king of Argos. Juno opposes, but to no effect; and Mercury is sent on a message to the shades, to the ghost of Laius, who is to appear to Eteocles, and provoke him to break the agreement. Polynices, in the mean time, departs from Thebes by night, is overtaken by a storm, and arrives at Argos, where he meets with Tydeus, who had fled from Calydon, having killed his brother. Adrastus entertains them, having received an oracle from Apollo, that his daughters should be married to a boar and a lion, which he understands to be meant of these strangers, by whom the hides of those beasts were worn, and who arrived at the time when he kept an annual feast in honour of that god. The rise of this solemnity. He relates to his guests the loves of Phœbus and Psamathe, and the story of Choroëbus: he inquires, and is made acquainted with their descent and quality: the sacrifice is renewed, and the book concludes with a hymn to Apollo.

FRATERNAL rage the guilty Thebes alarms;
Th' alternate reign destroy'd by impious arms
Demand our song; a sacred fury fires
My ravish'd breast, and all the Muse inspires.
O Goddess! say, shall I deduce my rhymes
From the dire nation in its early times,
Europa's rage, Agenor's stern decree,
And Cadmus searching round the spacious sea?

How with the serpent's teeth he sow'd the soil,
And reap'd an iron harvest of his toil? 10
Or how from joining stones the city sprung,
While to his harp divine Amphion sung?
Or shall I Juno's hate to Thebes resound,
Whose fatal rage th' unhappy monarch found?
The sire against the son his arrows drew; 15
O'er the wide fields the furious mother flew,
And while her arms a second hope contain,
Sprung from the rocks, and plung'd into the main.
But wave whate'er to Cadmus may belong,
And fix, O Muse! the barrier of thy song 20
At Œdipus---from his disasters trace
The long confusions of his guilty race:
Nor yet attempt to stretch thy bolder wing,
And mighty Cæsar's conquering eagles sing; 24
How twice he tam'd proud Ister's rapid flood, [blood;
While Dacian mountains stream'd with barbarous
Twice taught the Rhine beneath his laws to roll,
And stretch'd his empire to the frozen pole;
Or, long before, with early valour strove
In youthful arms t' assert the cause of Jove. 30
And thou, great heir of all thy father's fame,
Increase of glory to the Latian name!
Oh! bless thy Rome with an eternal reign,
Nor let desiring worlds entreat in vain.
What though the stars contract their heavenly space,
And crowd their shining ranks to yield thee place; 36
Though all the skies, ambitious of thy sway,
Conspire to court thee from our world away;
Though Phœbus longs to mix his rays with thine,
And in thy glories more serenely shine; 40
Though Jove himself no less content would be
To part his throne and share his heaven with thee;
Yet stay, great Cæsar! and vouchsafe to reign
O'er the wide earth, and o'er the watery main;
Resign to Jove his empire of the skies, 45
And people Heaven with Roman deities.
The time will come when a diviner flame
Shall warm my breast to sing of Cæsar's fame!

Meanwhile permit that my preluding Muse
In Theban wars an humbler theme may chuse: 50
Of furious hate surviving death she sings.

A fatal throne to two contending kings,
And funeral flames that, parting wide in air,
Express the discord of the souls they bear:
Of towns dispeopled, and the wandering ghosts 55
Of kings unburied in the wasted coasts;
When Dirce's fountain blush'd with Grecian blood,
And Thetis, near Ismenos' swelling flood,
With dread beheld the rolling surges sweep
In heaps his slaughter'd sons into the deep. 60

What hero, Clio! wilt thou first relate?
The rage of Tydeus, or the prophet's fate?
Or how, with hills of slain on every side,
Hippomedon repell'd the hostile tide?
Or how the youth, with every grace adorn'd, 65
Untimely fell, to be for ever mourn'd?
Then to fierce Capaneus thy verse extend,
And sing with horror his prodigious end.

Now wretched Œdipus, depriv'd of sight,
Led a long death in everlasting night; 70
But while he dwells where not a cheerful ray,
Can pierce the darkness, and abhors the day,
The clear reflecting mind presents his sin
In frightful views, and makes it day within;
Returning thoughts in endless circles roll, 75
And thousand furies haunt his guilty soul:
The wretch then lifted to th' unpitying skies
Those empty orbs from whence he tore his eyes,
Whose wounds, yet fresh, with bloody hands he strook,
While from his breast these dreadful accents broke.

"Ye Gods! that o'er the gloomy regions reign, 81
Where guilty spirits feel eternal pain;
Thou, sable Styx! whose livid streams are roll'd,
Through dreary coasts, which I though blind behold;
Tisiphone! that oft has heard my prayer, 85
Assist, if Œdipus deserve thy care.
If you receiv'd me from Jocasta's womb,
And nurs'd the hope of mischiefs yet to come;

If, leaving Polybus, I took my way
 To Cyrrha's temple, on that fatal day, 90
 When by the son the trembling father dy'd,
 Where the three roads the Phocian fields divide ;
 If I the Sphynx's riddles durst explain,
 Taught by thyself to win the promis'd reign ;
 If wretched I, by baleful furies led, 95
 With monstrous mixture stain'd my mother's bed,
 For hell and thee begot an impious brood,
 And with full lust those horrid joys renew'd ;
 Then, self condemn'd, to shades of endless night,
 Forc'd from these orbs the bleeding balls of sight ;
 Oh, hear ! and aid the vengeance I require, 101
 If worthy thee, and what thou might'st inspire.
 My sons their old unhappy sire despise,
 Spoil'd of his kingdom, and depriv'd of eyes ;
 Guideless I wander, unregarded mourn, 105
 While these exalt their sceptres o'er my urn ;
 These sons, ye Gods ! who, with flagitious pride,
 Insult my darkness and my groans deride.
 Art thou a father, unregarding Jove !
 And sleeps thy thunder in the realms above ? 110
 Thou Fury ! then some lasting curse entail,
 Which o'er their children's children shall prevail ;
 Place on their heads that crown destain'd with gore,
 Which these dire hands from my slain father tore ;
 Go, and a parent's heavy curses bear, 115
 Break all the bonds of nature, and prepare
 Their kindred souls to mutual hate and war. }
 Give them to dare, what I might wish to see,
 Blind as I am, some glorious villainy !
 Soon shalt thou find, if thou but arm their hands,
 Their ready guilt preventing thy commands : 121
 Couldst thou some great proportion'd mischief frame.
 They'd prove the father from whose loins they came."
 The Fury heard, while on Cocytus' brink
 Her snakes, untied, sulphureous waters drink ; 125
 But at the summons roll'd her eyes around,
 And snatch'd the starting serpents from the ground.

Not half so swiftly shoots along in air,
 The gliding lightning or descending star.
 Through crowds of airy shades she wing'd her flight,
 And dark dominions of the silent night; 131
 Swift as she pass'd the flitting ghosts withdrew,
 And the pale spectres trembled at her view;
 To th' iron gates of Ténarus she flies,
 There spreads her dusky pinions to the skies. 135
 The day beheld, and, sickening at the sight,
 Veil'd her fair glories in the shades of night.
 Affrighted Atlas on the distant shore
 Trembled, and shook the heav'ns and gods he bore.
 Now from beneath Malea's airy height, 140
 Aloft she sprung, and steer'd to Thebes her flight;
 With eager speed the well-known journey took,
 Nor here regrets the hell she late forsook.
 A hundred snakes her gloomy visage shade,
 A hundred serpents guard her horrid head; 145
 In her sunk eyeballs dreadful meteors glow;
 Such rays from Phœbe's bloody circles flow, [high
 When labouring with strong charms she shoots from
 A fiery gleam, and reddens all the sky. [came
 Blood stain'd her cheeks, and from her mouth there
 Blue steaming poisons, and a length of flame. 151
 From every blast of her contagious breath,
 Famine and draught proceed, and plagues and death.
 A robe obscene was o'er her shoulders thrown,
 A dress by fates and furies worn alone. 155
 She toss'd her meagre arms; her better hand
 In waving circles whirl'd a funeral brand:
 A serpent from her left was seen to rear
 His flaming crest, and lash the yielding air.
 But when the fury took her stand on high, 160
 Where vast Cithæron's top salutes the sky,
 A hiss from all the snaky tire went round,
 The dreadful signal all the rocks rebound,
 And through the Achaian cities send the sound. }
 Cete, with high Parnassus, heard the voice, 165
 Eurotas' banks remurmur'd to the noise;

Again Leucothoë skook at these alarms,
 And press'd Palæmon closer in her arms.
 Headlong from thence the glowing fury springs,
 And o'er the Theban palace spreads her wings, 170
 Once more invades the guilty dome, and shrouds
 Its bright pavilions in a veil of clouds.

Straight with the rage of all their race possest,
 Stung to the soul, the brothers start from rest,
 And all their furies wake within their breast: 175 }

Their tortur'd minds repining envy tears,
 And hate engender'd by suspicious fears;
 And sacred thirst of sway, and all the ties
 Of nature broke, and royal perjuries;
 And impotent desire to reign alone, 180
 That scorns the dull reversion of a throne.

Each would the sweets of sovereign rule devour.
 While discord waits upon divided power.

As stubborn steers, by brawny ploughmen broke,
 And join'd reluctant to the galling yoke, 185
 Alike disdain with servile necks to bear

Th' unwonted weight, or drag the crooked share,
 But rend the reins, and bound a different way,
 And all the furrows in confusion lay:
 Such was the discord of the royal pair, 190
 Whom fury drove precipitate to war.

In vain the chiefs contriv'd a specious way
 To govern Thebes by their alternate sway:
 Unjust decree! while this enjoys the state,
 That mourns in exile his unequal fate; 195
 And the short monarch of a hasty year
 Foresees with anguish his returning heir.

Thus did the league their impious arms restrain,
 But scarce subsisted to the second reign.

Yet then no proud aspiring piles were rais'd, 200
 No fretted roofs with polish'd metals blaz'd;
 No labour'd columns in long order plac'd,
 No Grecian stone the pompous arches grac'd;
 No nightly bands in glittering armour wait
 Before the sleepless tyrant's guarded gate; 205

No chargers then were wrought in burnish'd gold,
 Nor silver vases took the forming mould;
 Nor gems on bowls emboss'd were seen to shine,
 Blaze on the brims and sparkle in the wine—
 Say, wretched rivals! what provokes your rage? 210
 Say to what end your impious arms engage?
 Not all bright Phœbus' views in early morn,
 Or when his evening beams the west adorn,
 When the south glows with his meridian ray,
 And the cold north receives a fainter day; 215
 For crimes like these not all those realms suffice,
 Were all those realms the guilty victor's prize!

But fortune now (the lots of empire thrown)
 Decrees to proud Eteocles the crown.
 What joys, O tyrant! swell'd thy soul that day, 220
 When all were slaves thou couldst around survey,
 Pleas'd to behold unbounded pow'r thy own,
 And singly fill a fear'd and envied throne!

But the vile vulgar, ever discontent,
 Their growing fears in secret murmurs vent; 225
 Still prone to change, though still the slaves of state,
 And sure the monarch whom they have to hate;
 New lords they madly make, then tamely bear,
 And softly curse the tyrants whom they fear:
 And one of those who groan beneath the sway 230
 Of kings impos'd, and grudgingly obey,
 (Whom envy to the great, and vulgar spite,
 With scandal arm'd, th' ignoble mind's delight)
 Exclaim'd---“O Thebes! for thee what fates remain,
 What woes attend this inauspicious reign? 235
 Must we, alas! our doubtful necks prepare
 Each haughty master's yoke by turns to bear,
 And still to change whom chang'd we still must fear?” }
 These now control a wretched people's fate,
 These can divide and these reverse the state: 240
 Ev'n fortune rules no more---O servile land,
 Where exil'd tyrants still by turns command!
 Thou sire of gods and men, imperial Jove!
 Is this th' eternal doom decreed above?

On thy own offspring hast thou fixt this fate 245
 From the first birth of our unhappy state,
 When banish'd Cadmus, wandering o'er the main,
 For lost Europa search'd the world in vain,
 And fated in Bœotian fields to found
 A rising empire on a foreign ground, 250
 First rais'd our walls on that ill-omen'd plain
 Where earth-born brothers were by brothers slain?
 What lofty looks th' unrivall'd monarch bears!
 How all the tyrant in his face appears!
 What sullen fury clouds his scornful brow! 255
 Gods! how his eyes with threatening ardour glow!
 Can this imperious lord forget to reign,
 Quit all his state, descend, and serve again?
 Yet who before more popularly bow'd?
 Who more propitious to the suppliant crowd? 260
 Patient of right, familiar in the throne,
 What wonder then? he was not then alone.
 O wretched we! a vile submissive train,
 Fortune's tame fools, and slaves in every reign!
 As when two winds with rival force contend, 265
 This way and that the wavering sails they bend,
 While freezing Boreas and black Eurus blow,
 Now here, now there, the reeling vessel throw;
 Thus on each side, alas! our tottering state
 Feels all the fury of resistless fate, 270
 And doubtful still, and still distracted stands,
 While that prince threatens, and while this com-
 mands."

And now th' almighty father of the gods
 Convenes a council in the bless'd abodes.
 Far in the bright recesses of the skies 275
 High o'er the rolling heav'ns, a mansion lies,
 Whence, far below, the gods at once survey
 The realms of rising and declining day, [sea. }
 And all th' extended space of earth, and air, and }
 Full in the midst, and on a starry throne, 280
 The majesty of heav'n superior shone:
 Serene he look'd, and gave an awful nod,
 And all the trembling spheres confess'd the god.

At Jove's assent the deities around
 In solemn state the consistory crown'd. 285
 Next a long order of inferior powers
 Ascend from hills, and plains, and shady bowers;
 Those from whose urns the rolling rivers flow,
 And those that give the wandering winds to blow:
 Here all their rage and ev'n their murmurs cease, 290
 And sacred silence reigns, and universal peace.
 A shining synod of majestic gods
 Gilds with new lustre the divine abodes:
 Heav'n seems improv'd with a superior ray,
 And the bright arch reflects a double day. 295
 The monarch then his solemn silence broke,
 The still creation listen'd while he spoke;
 Each sacred accent bears eternal weight,
 And each irrevocable word is fate.

"How long shall man the wrath of Heav'n defy,
 And force unwilling vengeance from the sky? 301
 O race confederate into crimes, that prove
 Triumphant o'er th' eluded rage of Jove!
 This wearied arm can scarce the bolt sustain,
 And unregarded thunder rolls in vain: 305
 Th' o'erlabour'd Cyclop from his task retires,
 Th' Æolian forge exhausted of its fires.
 For this I suffer'd Phœbus' steeds to stray,
 And the mad ruler to misguide the day,
 When the wide earth to heaps of ashes turn'd, 310
 And Heav'n itself the wandering chariot burn'd:
 For this my brother of the watery reign
 Releas'd th' impetuous sluices of the main;
 But flames consum'd, and billows rag'd in vain. }
 Two races now, allied to Jove, offend; 315
 To punish these, see Jove himself descend.
 The Theban kings their line from Cadmus trace,
 From godlike Perseus those of Argive race.
 Unhappy Cadmus' fate who does not know,
 And the long series of succeeding woe? 320
 How oft the furies from the deeps of night
 Arose, and mix'd with men in mortal fight;

Th' exulting mother stain'd with filial blood,
 The savage hunter and the haunted wood?
 The direful banquet why should I proclaim, 325
 And crimes that grieve the trembling gods to name?
 Ere I recount the sins of these profane,
 The sun would sink into the western main,
 And, rising, gild the radiant east again. }
 Have we not seen (the blood of Laius shed) 330
 The murdering son ascend his parent's bed,
 Through violated nature force his way,
 And stain the sacred womb where once he lay?
 Yet now in darkness and despair he groans,
 And for the crimes of guilty fate atones; 335
 His sons with scorn their eyeless father view,
 Insult his wounds, and make them bleed anew.
 Thy curse, O Ædipus! just Heav'n alarms,
 And sets th' avenging thunderer in arms.
 I from the root thy guilty race will tear, 340
 And give the nations to the waste of war.
 Adrastus soon, with gods averse, shall join
 In dire alliance with the Theban line;
 Hence strife shall rise, and mortal war succeed;
 The guilty realms of Tantalus shall bleed: 345
 Fix'd is their doom. This all-remembering breast
 Yet harbours vengeance for the tyrant's feast."

He said; and thus the queen of Heav'n return'd:
 (With sudden grief her labouring bosom burn'd)
 "Must I, whose cares Phoroneus' towers defend, 350
 Must I, O Jove! in bloody wars contend?
 Thou know'st those regions my protection claim,
 Glorious in arms, in riches, and in fame:
 Though there the fair Egyptian heifer fed,
 And there deluded Argus slept and bled; 355
 Though the brazen tow'r was storm'd of old,
 When Jove descended in almighty gold;
 Yet I can pardon those obscurer rapes,
 Those bashful crimes disguis'd in borrow'd shapes;
 But Thebes, where shining in celestial charms, 360
 Thou cam'st triumphant to a mortal's arms,

When all my glories o'er her limbs were spread,
 And blazing lightnings danc'd around her bed;
 Curs'd Thebes the vengeance it deserves may prove---
 Ah! why should Argos feel the rage of Jove? 365
 Yet since thou wilt thy sister-queen control,
 Since still the lust of discord fires thy soul,
 Go, raise my Samos, let Mycene fall,
 And level with the dust the Spartan wall;
 No more let mortals Juno's pow'r invoke, 370
 Her fanes no more with eastern incense smoke,
 Nor victims sink beneath the sacred stroke;
 But to your Isis all my rights transfer,
 Let altars blaze and temples smoke for her;
 For her through Egypt's fruitful clime renown'd, 375
 Let weeping Nilus hear the timbrel sound.
 But if thou must reform the stubborn times,
 Avenging on the sons the fathers' crimes,
 And from the long records of distant age
 Derive incitements to renew thy rage; 380
 Say, from what period then has Jove design'd
 To date his vengeance? to what bounds confin'd?
 Begin from thence, where first Alpheus hides
 His wandering stream, and through the briny tides
 Unmix'd to his Sicilian river glides. 385
 Thy own Arcadians there the thunder claim,
 Whose impious rites disgrace thy mighty name;
 Who raise thy temples where the chariot stood
 Of fierce Enomaüs, defil'd with blood;
 Where once his steeds their savage banquet found,
 And human bones yet whiten all the ground. 391
 Say, can those honours please; and canst thou love
 Presumptuous Crete, that boasts the tomb of Jove?
 And shall not Tantalus's kingdom share
 Thy wife and sister's tutelary care? 395
 Reverse, O Jove! thy too severe decree,
 Nor doom to war a race deriv'd from thee;
 On impious realms and barbarous kings impose
 Thy plagues, and curse them with such sons as those."
 Thus in reproach and pray'r the queen exprest 400
 The rage and grief contending in her breast.

Unmov'd remain'd the ruler of the sky,
 And from his throne return'd this stern reply:
 " 'Twas thus I deem'd thy haughty soul would bear }
 The dire though just revenge which I prepare 405 }
 Against a nation thy peculiar care;
 No less Dione might for Thebes contend,
 Nor Bacchus less his native town defend;
 Yet these in silence see the fates fulfil
 Their work, and reverence our superior will: 410
 For by the black infernal Styx I swear,
 (That dreadful oath which binds the Thunderer)
 'Tis fix'd; th' irrevocable doom of Jove;
 No force can bend me, no persuasion move.
 Haste then, Cyllenius, through the liquid air, 415
 Go mount the winds, and to the shades repair;
 Bid hell's black monarch my commands obey,
 And give up Laius to the realms of day,
 Whose ghost yet shivering on Cocytus' sand
 Expects its passage to the farther strand: 420
 Let the pale sire revisit Thebes, and bear
 These pleasing orders to the tyrants ear;
 That from his exil'd brother, swell'd with pride
 Of foreign forces and his Argive bride,
 Almighty Jove commands him to detain 425
 The promis'd empire, and alternate reign.
 Be this the cause of more than mortal hate;
 The rest succeeding times shall ripen into fate.
 The god obeys, and to his feet applies
 Those golden wings that cut the yielding skies: 430
 His ample hat his beamy locks o'erspread,
 And veil'd the starry glories of his head.
 He seiz'd the wand that causes sleep to fly,
 Or in soft slumbers seals the wakeful eye;
 That drives the dead to dark Tartarean coasts, 435
 Or back to life compels the wandering ghosts.
 Thus through the parting clouds the son of May
 Wings on the whistling winds his rapid way;
 Now smoothly steers through air his equal flight, 439
 Now springs aloft, and tow'rs th' ethereal height;

Then wheeling down the steep of heav'n he flies,
And draws a radiant circle o'er the skies.

Mean-time the banish'd Polynices roves
(His Thebes abandon'd) through th' Aonian groves,
While future realms his wandering thoughts delight,
His daily vision, and his dream by night; 446

Forbidden Thebes appears before his eye,
From whence he sees his absent brother fly,
With transport views the airy rule his own,
And swells on an imaginary throne; 450

Fain would he cast a tedious age away,
And live out all in one triumphant day:
He chides the lazy progress of the sun,
And bids the year with swifter motion run:
With anxious hopes his craving mind is tost, 455
And all his joys in length of wishes lost.

The hero then resolves his course to bend
Where ancient Danaus' fruitful fields extend, }
And fam'd Mycene's lofty towers ascend; }
(Where late the sun did Atreus' crimes detest, 460
And disappear'd in horror of the feast)
And now by chance, by fate, or furies, led,
From Bacchus' consecrated caves he fled,
Where the shrill cries of frantic matrons sound,
And Pentheus' blood enrich'd the rising ground;
Then sees Cithæron towering o'er the plain, 466
And thence declining gently to the main;
Next to the bounds of Nisus' realm repairs,
Where treacherous Scylla cut the purple hairs;
The hanging cliffs of Scyron's rock explores, 470
And hears the murmurs of the different shores;
Passes the strait that parts the foaming seas,
And stately Corinth's pleasing site surveys.

'Twas now the time when Phœbus yields to night,
And rising Cynthia sheds her silver light; 475
Wide o'er the world in solemn pomp she drew,
Her airy chariot, hung with pearly dew:
All birds and beasts lie hush'd: sleep steals away
The wild desire of men, and toils of day,

And brings, descending through the silent air, 480
A sweet forgetfulness of human care.
Yet no red clouds, with golden borders gay,
Promise the skies the bright return of day;
No faint reflections of the distant light
Streak with long gleams the scatt'ring shades of night:
From the damp earth impervious vapours rise, 486
Increase the darkness, and involve the skies.
At once the rushing winds with roaring sound
Burst from th' Æolian caves, and rend the ground;
With equal rage their airy quarrel try, 490
And win by turns the kingdom of the sky:
But with a thicker night black Auster shrouds
The heav'ns, and drives on heaps the rolling clouds,
From whose dark womb a rattling tempest pours,
Which the cold north congeals to haily show'rs:
From pole to pole the thunder roars aloud, 496
And broken lightnings flash from every cloud.
Now smokes with show'rs the misty mountain-ground,
And floated fields lie undistinguish'd round:
Th' Inachian streams with headlong fury run, 500
And Erasinus rolls a deluge on;
The foaming Lerna swells above its bounds,
And spreads its ancient poisons o'er the grounds:
Where late was dust, now rapid torrents play,
Rush through the mounds, and bear the dams away:
Old limbs of trees, from crackling forests torn, 506
Are whirl'd in air, and on the winds are borne:
The storm the dark Lycæan groves display'd,
And first to light expos'd the sacred shade.
Th' intrepid Theban hears the bursting sky, 510
Sees yawning rocks in massy fragments fly,
And views astonish'd, from the hills afar,
The floods descending, and the watery war,
That, driv'n by storms, and pouring o'er the plain,
Swept herds, and hinds, and houses, to the main.
Through the brown horrors of the night he fled, 516
Nor knows, amaz'd, what doubtful path to tread;
His brother's image to his mind appears, [fears.
Inflames his heart with rage, and wings his feet with

So fares the sailor on the stormy main,
 When clouds conceal Boötes' golden wain,
 When not a star its friendly lustre keeps,
 Nor trembling Cynthia glimmers on the deep;
 He dreads the rocks, and shoals, and seas, and skies,
 While thunder roars, and lightning round him flies.

Thus strove the chief, on ev'ry side distress'd; 526
 Thus still his courage with his toils increas'd:
 With his broad shield oppos'd, he forc'd his way
 Thro' thickest woods, and rous'd the beasts of prey;
 Till he beheld where from Larissa's height 530

The shelving walls reflect a glancing light:
 Thither with haste the Theban hero flies:
 On this side Lerna's poisonous water lies,
 On that Prosymma's grove and temple rise. }
 He pass'd the gates, which then unguarded lay, 535
 And to the regal palace bent his way;
 On the cold marble, spent with toil, he lies;
 And waits till pleasing slumber seals his eyes.

Adrastus here his happy people sways,
 Bless'd with calm peace in his declining days; 540
 By both his parents of descent divine,
 Great Jove and Phœbus grac'd his noble line:
 Heav'n had not crown'd his wishes with a son,
 But two fair daughters heir'd his state and throne.
 To him Apollo (wond'rous to relate! 545

But who can pierce into the depths of fate?)
 Had sung—"Expect thy sons on Argos' shore,
 "A yellow lion and a bristly boar."
 This long revolv'd in his paternal breast,
 Sat heavy on his heart, and broke his rest; 550
 This, great Amphiaraus! lay hid from thee,
 Though skill'd in fate and dark futurity,
 The father's care and prophet's art were vain,
 For thus did the predicting god ordain.

Lo, hapless Tydeus! whose ill fated hand 555
 Had slain his brother, leaves his native land,
 And, seiz'd with horror in the shades of night,
 Thro' the thick deserts headlong urg'd his flight:

Now by the fury of the tempest driv'n,
 He seeks a shelter from th' inclement heav'n, 560
 Till, led by fate, the Theban's steps he treads,
 And to fair Argos' open courts succeeds.

When thus the chiefs from different lands resort
 To Adrastus' realms and hospitable court,
 The king surveys his guests with curious eyes, 565
 And views their arms and habits with surprise.

A lion's yellow skin the Theban wears,
 Horrid his mane, and rough with curling hairs ;
 Such once employ'd Alcides' youthful toils,
 Ere yet adorn'd with Nemea's dreadful spoils. 570

A boar's stiff hide, of Calydonian breed,
 Oenides' manly shoulders overspread ;
 Oblique his tusks, erect his bristles stood,
 Alive the pride and terror of the wood.

Struck with the sight, and fix'd in deep amaze,
 The king th' accomplish'd oracle surveys, 576
 Reveres Apollo's vocal caves, and owns
 The guiding godhead and his future sons ;
 O'er all his bosom secret transports reign,
 And a glad horror shoots through every vein ; 580
 To heav'n he lifts his hands, erects his sight,
 And thus invokes the silent queen of night :

“ Goddess of shades ! beneath whose gloomy reign
 Yon spangled arch glows with the starry train ;
 You who the cares of heav'n and earth allay, 585
 Till nature, quicken'd by th' inspiring ray,
 Wakes to new vigour with the rising day :

O thou ! who freest me from my doubtful state,
 Long lost and wilder'd in the maze of fate !
 Be present still, O Goddess ! in our aid ; 590

Proceed, and 'firm those omens thou hast made.
 We to thy name our annual rites will pay,
 And on thy altars sacrifices lay ;

The sable flock shall fall beneath the stroke,
 And fill thy temples with a grateful smoke. 595

Hail ! faithful Tripes ! hail ! ye dark abodes
 Of awful Phœbus ! I confess the gods !”

Thus, seiz'd with sacred fear, the monarch pray'd;
 Then to his inner court the guests convey'd;
 Where yet thin fumes from dying sparks arise, 600 }
 And dust yet white upon each altar lies, }
 The relics of a former sacrifice.

The king once more the solemn rites requires,
 And bids renew the feasts and wake the fires.
 His train obey, while all the courts around 605
 With noisy care and various tumult sound.
 Embroider'd purple clothes the golden beds;
 This slave the floor, and that the table spreads;
 A third dispels the darkness of the night,
 And fills depending lamps with beams of light; 610
 Here loaves in canisters are pil'd on high,
 And there in flames the slaughter'd victims fly.
 Sublime in regal state Adrastus shone,
 Stretch'd on rich carpets on his ivory throne;
 A lofty couch receives each princely guest; 615
 Around, at awful distance, wait the rest.

And now the king, his royal feast to grace,
 Acestis calls, the guardian of his race,
 Who first their youth in arts of virtue train'd,
 And their ripe years in modest grace maintain'd; 620
 Then softly whisper'd in her faithful ear,
 And bade his daughters at the rites appear.
 When from the close apartments of the night
 The royal nymphs approach divinely bright,
 Such was Diana's, such Minerva's face, 625
 Nor shine their beauties with superior grace.
 But that in these a milder charm endears,
 And less of terror in their looks appears.
 As on the heroes first they cast their eyes,
 O'er their fair cheeks the glowing blushes rise: 630
 Their downcast looks a decent shame confest,
 Then on their father's reverend features rest.

The banquet done, the monarch gives the sign
 To fill the goblets high with sparkling wine,
 Which Danaus us'd in sacred rites of old, 635
 With sculpture grac'd, and rough with rising gold.

Here to the clouds victorious Perseus flies,
 Medusa seems to move her languid eyes,
 And, ev'n in gold, turns paler as she dies :
 There from the chase Jove's towering eagle bears, 640
 On golden wings, the Phrygian to the stars ;
 Still as he rises in th' ethereal height,
 His native mountains lessen to his sight ;
 While all his sad companions upward gaze,
 Fix'd on the glorious scene in wild amaze ; 645
 And the swift hounds, affrighted as he flies,
 Run to the shade, and bark against the skies.

This golden bowl with generous juice was crown'd.
 The first libation sprinkled on the ground,
 By turns on each celestial pow'r they call ; 650
 With Phœbus' name resounds the vaulted hall.
 The courtly train, the strangers, and the rest,
 Crown'd with chaste laurel, and with garlands drest,
 While with rich gums the fuming altars blaze,
 Salute the god in numerous hymns of praise. 655

Then thus the king: " Perhaps, my noble guests !
 These honour'd altars, and these annual feasts,
 To bright Apollo's awful name design'd,
 Unknown, with wonder may perplex your mind.
 Great was the cause: our old solemnities 660
 From no blind zeal or fond tradition rise ;
 But sav'd from death, our Argives yearly pay
 These grateful honours to the god of day.

" When by a thousand darts the Python slain
 With orbs unroll'd lay covering all the plain, 665
 (Transfix'd as o'er Castalia's streams he hung,
 And suck'd new poisons with his triple tongue,)
 To Argos' realms the victor god resorts,
 And enters old Crotopos' humble courts.
 This rural prince one only daughter bless'd, 670
 That all the charms of blooming youth possess'd ;
 Fair was her face, and spotless was her mind,
 Where filial love with virgin sweetness join'd :
 Happy ! and happy still she might have prov'd,
 Were she less beautiful, or less belov'd ! 675

But Phœbus lov'd, and on the flowery side
 Of Nemea's stream the yielding fair enjoy'd.
 Now ere ten moons their orb with light adorn,
 Th' illustrious offspring of the god was born;
 The nymph, her father's anger to evade, 680
 Retires from Argos to the sylvan shade;
 To woods and wilds the pleasing burden bears,
 And trusts her infant to a shepherd's cares.

“ How mean a fate, unhappy child, is thine!
 Ah! how unworthy those of race divine! 685
 On flowery herbs in some green covert laid,
 His bed the ground, his canopy the shade,
 He mixes with the bleating lambs his cries,
 While the rude swain his rural music tries,
 To call soft slumbers on his infant eyes. 690 }

Yet even in those obscure abodes to live
 Was more, alas! than cruel fate would give;
 For on the grassy verdure as he lay,
 And breath'd the freshness of the early day,
 Devouring dogs the helpless infant tore, 695
 Fed on his trembling limbs, and lapp'd the gore.
 Th' astonish'd mother, when the rumour came,
 Forgets her father, and neglects her fame;
 With loud complaints she fills the yielding air,
 And beats her breast, and rends her flowing hair;
 Then wild with anguish to her sire she flies, 701
 Demands the sentence, and contented dies.

“ But touch'd with sorrow for the deed too late,
 The raging god prepares t' avenge her fate.
 He sends a monster, horrible and fell, 705
 Begot by furies in the depths of hell.

The pest a virgin's face and bosom bears;
 High on her crown a rising snake appears, }
 Guards her black front, and hisses in her hairs. }
 About the realm she walks her dreadful round, 710
 When night with sable wings o'erspreads the ground,
 Devours young babes before their parents' eyes,
 And feeds and thrives on public miseries.

“ But generous rage the bold Chorcæbus warms,
 Chorcæbus! fam'd for virtue as for arms; 715

Some few like him, inspir'd with martial flame,
 Thought a short life well lost for endless fame.
 These, where two ways in equal parts divide,
 The direful monster from afar descry'd,
 Two bleeding babes depending at her side; 720
 Whose panting vitals, warm with life, she draws,
 And in their hearts embrues her cruel claws.
 The youths surround her with extended spears,
 But brave Choroëbus in the front appears;
 Deep in her breast he plung'd his shining sword, 725
 And hell's dire monster back to hell restor'd.
 Th' Inachians view the slain with vast surprise,
 Her twisting volumes, and her rolling eyes,
 Her spotted breast and gaping womb imbru'd
 With livid poison and our children's blood. 730
 The crowd in stupid wonder fix'd appear,
 Pale ev'n in joy, nor yet forget to fear.
 Some with vast beams the squallid corpse engage,
 And weary all the wild efforts of rage.
 The birds obscene, that nightly flock'd to taste, 735
 With hollow screeches fled the dire repast;
 And rav'nous dogs, allur'd by scented blood,
 And starving wolves, ran howling to the wood.
 " But fir'd with rage, from cleft Parnassus' brow
 Avenging Phœbus bent his deadly bow, 740
 And hissing flew the feather'd fates below:
 A night of sultry clouds involv'd around
 The towers, the fields, and the devoted ground:
 And now a thousand lives together fled,
 Death with his scythe cut off the fatal thread, 745
 And a whole province in his triumph led.
 " But Phœbus ask'd, why noxious fires appear,
 And raging Sirius blasts the sickly year?
 Demands their lives by whom his monster fell,
 And dooms a dreadful sacrifice to hell. 750
 " Bless'd be thy dust, and let eternal fame
 Attend thy manes, and preserve thy name,
 Undaunted hero! who, divinely brave,
 In such a cause disdain'd thy life to save,

But view'd the shrine with a superior look,
And its upbraided godhead thus bespoke." 755

' With piety, the soul's securest guard,
And conscious virtue, still its own reward,
Willing I come, unknowing how to fear;
Nor shalt thou, Phœbus, find a suppliant here: 760
Thy monster's death to me was ow'd alone,
And 'tis a deed too glorious to disown.

Behold him here, for whom, so many days,
Impervious clouds conceal'd thy sullen rays;
For whom, as man no longer claim'd thy care, 765
Such numbers fell by pestilential air!

But if th' abandon'd race of human kind
From gods above no more compassion find;
If such inclemency in heav'n can dwell,
Yet why must unoffending Argos feel 770
The vengeance due to this unlucky steel?

On me, on me, let all thy fury fall,
Nor err from me, since I deserve it all,
Unless our desert cities please thy sight,
Or funeral flames reflect a grateful light. 775

Discharge thy shafts, this ready bosom rend,
And to the shades a ghost triumphant send:
But for my country let my fate atone;
Be mine the vengeance, as the crime my own.'

" Merit distress'd impartial Heav'n relieves: 780
Unwelcome life relenting Phœbus gives;
For not the vengeful pow'r, that glow'd with rage,
With such amazing virtue durst engage,
The clouds dispers'd, Apollo's wrath expir'd,
And from the wondering god th' unwilling youth
retir'd. 785

Thence we these altars in his temple raise,
And offer annual honours, feasts and praise:
Those solemn feasts propitious Phœbus please;
Those honours still renew'd his ancient wrath appease.

" But say, illustrious guest! (adjoin'd the king) 790
What name you bear from what high race you spring?
The noble Tydeus stands confess'd, and known
Our neighbour prince, and heir of Calydon.

Relate your fortunes while the friendly night
And silent hours to various talk invite." 795

The Theban bends on earth his gloomy eyes,
Confus'd, and sadly thus at length replies :
" Before these altars how shall I proclaim
(O generous prince !) my nation, or my name,
Or through what veins our ancient blood has roll'd?
Let the sad tale for ever rest untold ! 801

Yet if, propitious to a wretch unknown,
You seek to share in sorrows not your own,
Know then, from Cadmus I derive my race,
Jocasta's son, and Thebes my native place." 805

To whom the king (who felt his generous breast
Touch'd with concern for his unhappy guest)
Replies:—" Ah ! why forbears the son to name
His wretched father, known too well by fame?
Fame that delights around the world to stray, 810
Scorns not to take our Argos in her way.

Ev'n those who dwell where suns at distance roll,
In northern wilds, and freeze beneath the pole,
And those who tread the burning Lybian lands,
The faithless syrtes, and the moving sands ; 815

Who view the western sea's extremest bounds,
Or drink of Ganges in their eastern grounds ;
All these the woes of *Ædipus* have known,
Your fates, your furies, and your haunted town.
If on the sons the parents' crimes descend. 820

What prince from those his lineage can defend?
Be this thy comfort, that 'tis thine t' efface,
With virtuous acts, thy ancestors' disgrace,
And be thyself the honour of thy race. }

But see ! the stars begin to steal away, 825
And shine more faintly at approaching day:
Now pour the wine ; and in your tuneful lays
Once more resound the great *Apollo's* praise."

" Oh, father *Phœbus* ! whether *Lycia's* coast
And snowy mountains thy bright presence boast ;
Whether to sweet *Castalia* thou repair, 831
And bathe in silver dews thy yellow hair ;

Or pleas'd to find fair Delos float no more,
Delight in Cynthus and the shady shore;
Or chuse thy seat in Ilion's proud abodes, 835
The shining structures rais'd by labouring gods:
By thee the bow and mortal shafts are borne;
Eternal charms thy blooming youth adorn:
Skill'd in the laws of secret fate above,
And the dark counsels of almighty Jove, 840
'Tis thine the seeds of future war to know,
The change of sceptres and impending woe;
When direful meteors spread through glowing air
Long trails of light, and shake their blazing hair.
Thy rage the Phrygian felt, who durst aspire 845
T' excel the music of thy heav'nly lyre;
Thy shafts aveng'd lewd Tityus' guilty flame,
Th' immortal victim of thy mother's fame;
Thy hand slew Python, and the dame who lost
Her numerous offspring for a fatal boast. 850
In Phlegyas' doom thy just revenge appears,
Condemn'd to furies and eternal fears;
He views his food, but dreads, with lifted eye,
The mouldering rock that trembles from on high.
Propitious hear our prayer, O pow'r divine! 855
And on thy hospitable Argos shine;
Whether the style of Titan please thee more,
Whose purple rays th' Achæmenes adore;
Or great Osiris, who first taught the swain
In Pharian fields to sow the golden grain; 860
Or Mithra, to whose beams the Persian bows,
And pays, in hollow rocks, his awful vows;
Mithra! whose head the blaze of light adorns,
Who grasps the struggling heifer's lunar horns."

SAPPHO TO PHAON.

FROM THE FIFTEENTH OF OVID'S EPISTLES.

ARGUMENT.

Phaon, a youth of exquisite beauty, was deeply enamoured of Sappho a lady of Lesbos, from whom he met with the tenderest returns of passion: but his affection afterwards decaying, he left her and sailed for Sicily. She, unable to bear the loss of her lover, hearkened to all the mad suggestions of despair; and seeing no other remedy for her present miseries, resolved to throw herself into the sea, from Leucate, a promontory of Epirus, which was thought a cure in cases of obstinate love, and therefore had obtained the name of the Lover's Leap. But before she ventured upon this last step, entertaining still some fond hopes that she might be able to reclaim her constant, she wrote him this epistle, in which she gives him a strong picture of her distress and misery, occasioned by his absence; and endeavours, by all the artful insinuations and moving expressions she is mistress of, to sooth him to softness and mutual feeling. [Anon.]

SAY, lovely youth, that dost my heart command,
Can Phaon's eyes forget his Sappho's hand?
Must then her name the wretched writer prove,
To thy remembrance lost, as to thy love?
Ask not the cause that I new numbers chuse, 5
The lute neglected, and the lyric Muse;
Love taught my tears in sadder notes to flow,
And tun'd my heart to elegies of woe.
I burn, I burn, as when through ripen'd corn
By driving winds the spreading flames are borne! 10
Phaon to Ætna's scorching fields retires,
While I consume with more than Ætna's fires!
No more my soul a charm in music finds;
Music has charms alone for peaceful minds.
Soft scenes of solitude no more can please; 15
Love enters there, and I'm my own disease.
No more the Lesbian dames my passion move,
Once the dear objects of my guilty love;
All other loves are lost in only thine,
Oh, youth, ungrateful to a flame like mine! 20
Whom would not all those blooming charms surprise,
Those heav'nly looks, and dear deluding eyes?
The harp and bow would you like Phœbus bear,
A brighter Phœbus Phaon might appear;
Would you with ivy wreath your flowing hair, 25
Not Bacchus' self with Phaon could compare;
Yet Phœbus lov'd, and Bacchus felt the flame,
One Daphne warm'd, and one the Cretan dame;

Nymphs that in verse no more could rival me,
Than ev'n those gods contend in charms with thee.
The Muses teach me all their softest lays, 31
And the wide world resounds with Sappho's praise.
Though great Alcæus more sublimely sings,
And strikes with bolder rage the sounding strings,
No less renown attends the moving lyre, 35
Which Venus tunes, and all her loves inspire.
To me what Nature has in charms deny'd,
Is well by wit's more lasting flame supplied.
Though short my stature, yet my name extends
To Heav'n itself, and earth's remotest ends: 40
Brown as I am, an Ethiopian dame
Inspir'd young Perseus with a generous flame.
Turtles and doves of different hues unite,
And glossy jet is pair'd with shining white.
If to no charms thou wilt thy heart resign, 45
But such as merit, such as equal thine,
By none, alas! by none thou canst be mov'd;
Phaon alone by Phaon must be lov'd!
Yet once thy Sappho could thy cares employ,
Once in her arms you centred all your joy: 50
No time the dear remembrance can remove;
For oh! how vast a memory has love!
My music then you could for ever hear,
And all my words were music to your ear.
You stopp'd with kisses my enchanting tongue, 55
And found my kisses sweeter than my song.
In all I pleas'd, but most in what was best;
And the last joy was dearer than the rest.
Then with each word, each glance, each motion fir'd,
You still enjoy'd, and yet you still desir'd, 60
Till, all dissolving, in the trance we lay,
And in tumultuous raptures died away.
The fair Sicilians now thy soul inflame:
Why was I born, ye gods! a Lesbian dame?
But ah, beware, Sicilian nymphs! nor boast 65
That wandering heart which I so lately lost;
Nor be with all those tempting words abus'd,
Those tempting words were all to Sappho us'd,

And you that rule Sicilia's happy plains,
 Have pity, Venus, on your poet's pains! 70
 Shall fortune still in one sad tenor run,
 And still increase the woes so soon begun?
 Inur'd to sorrow from my tender years,
 My parents' ashes drank my early tears;
 My brother next, neglecting wealth and fame, 75
 Ignobly burn'd in a destructive flame:
 An infant daughter late my griefs increas'd,
 And all a mother's cares distract my breast.
 Alas! what more could fate itself impose,
 But thee, the last, and greatest of my woes? 80
 No more my robes in waving purple flow,
 Nor on my hand the sparkling diamonds glow;
 No more my locks in ringlets curl'd diffuse
 The costly sweetness of Arabian dew,
 Nor braids of gold the varied tresses bind, 85
 That fly disorder'd with the wanton wind:
 For whom should Sappho use such arts as these?
 He's gone whom only she desir'd to please!
 Cupid's light darts my tender bosom move,
 Still is there cause for Sappho still to love: 90
 So from my birth the sisters fixed my doom,
 And gave to Venus all my life to come;
 Or, while my Muse in melting notes complains,
 My yielding heart keeps measure to my strains.
 By charms like thine which all my soul have won, 95
 Who might not—ah! who would not be undone?
 For those Aurora Cephelus might scorn,
 And with fresh blushes paint the conscious morn.
 For those might Cynthia lengthen Phaon's sleep,
 And bid Endymion nightly tend his sheep. 100
 Venus for those had rapt thee to the skies,
 But Mars on thee might look with Venus' eyes.
 O scarce a youth, yet scarce a tender boy!
 O useful time for lovers to employ!
 Pride of thy age, and glory of thy race, 105
 Come to these arms, and melt in this embrace!
 vows you never will return, receive;
 take, at least, the love you will not give.

See, while I write, my words are lost in tears !
The less my sense, the more my love appears. 110
Sure 'twas not much to bid one kind adieu,
(At least to feign was never hard to you :)
“ Farewell, my Lesbian love,” you might have said ;
Or coldly thus, “ Farewell, O Lesbian maid !”
No tear did you, no parting kiss receive, 115
Nor knew I then how much I was to grieve.
No lover's gift your Sappho could confer,
And wrongs and woes were all you left with her.
No charge I gave you, and no charge could give,
But this, “ Be mindful of our loves, and live.” 120
Now by the Nine, those powers ador'd by me,
And Love, the god that ever waits on thee,
When first I heard (from whom I hardly knew)
That you were fled, and all my joys with you,
Like some sad statue, speechless, pale, I stood, 125
Grief chill'd my breast, and stopt my freezing blood ;
No sigh to rise, no tear had power to flow,
Fix'd in a stupid lethargy of woe :
But when its way th' impetuous passion found,
I rend my tresses, and my breast I wound ; 130
I rave, then weep ; I curse, and then complain ;
Now swell to rage, now melt in tears again.
Not fiercer pangs distract the mournful dame,
Whose first-born infant feeds the funeral flame.
My scornful brother with a smile appears, 135
Insults my woes, and triumphs in my tears ;
His hated image ever haunts my eyes ;
“ And why this grief ? thy daughter lives,” he cries.
Stung with my love, and furious with despair,
All torn my garments, and my bosom bare, 140
My woes, thy crimes, I to the world proclaim ;
Such inconsistent things are love and shame !
'Tis thou art all my care and my delight,
My daily longing, and my dream by night :
O night more pleasing than the brightest day, 145
When fancy gives what absence takes away ;
And, dress'd in all its visionary charms,
Restores my fair deserter to my arms !

Then round your neck in wanton wreaths I twine;
 Then you, methinks, as fondly circle mine: 150
 A thousand tender words I hear and speak;
 A thousand melting kisses give and take:
 Then fiercer joys, I blush to mention these,
 Yet, while I blush, confess how much they please.
 But when, with day, the sweet delusions fly, 155
 And all things wake to life and joy but I,
 As if once more forsaken, I complain,
 And close my eyes to dream of you again:
 Then frantic rise, and like some fury rove
 Through lonely plains, and through the silent grove,
 As if the silent grove and lonely plains, 161
 That knew my pleasures, could relieve my pains.
 I view the grotto, once the scene of love,
 The rocks around, the hanging roofs above,
 That charm'd me more, with native moss o'ergrown,
 Than Phrygian marble, or the Parian stone. 166
 I find the shades that veil'd our joys before;
 But, Phaon gone, these shades delight no more.
 Here the press'd herbs with bending tops betray
 Where oft entwin'd in amorous folds we lay: 170
 I kiss that earth which once was press'd by you,
 And all with tears the withering herbs bedew.
 For thee the fading trees appear to mourn,
 And birds defer their songs till thy return:
 Night shades the groves, and all in silence lie, 175
 All but the mournful Philomel and I:
 With mournful Philomel I join my strain;
 Of Tereus she, of Phaon I complain.
 A spring there is, whose silver waters show,
 Clear as a glass, the shining sands below: 180
 A flowery lotos spreads its arms above,
 Shades all the banks, and seems itself a grove;
 Eternal greens the mossy margin grace,
 Watch'd by the sylvan genius of the place.
 Here as I lay, and swell'd with tears the flood, 185
 Before my sight a watery virgin stood:
 She stood and cried, 'O you that love in vain!
 Hence, and seek the fair Leucadian main;

There stands a rock, from whose impending steep,
Apollo's fane surveys the rolling deep ; 190

There injur'd lovers, leaping from above,
Their flames extinguish, and forget to love.

Deucalion once with hopeless fury burn'd,
In vain he lov'd, relentless Pyrrha scorn'd :

But when from hence he plung'd into the main, 195
Deucalion scorn'd, and Pyrrha lov'd in vain.

Haste, Sappho, haste, from high Leucadia throw
Thy wretched weight, nor dread the deeps below !"

She spoke, and vanish'd with the voice---I rise,
And silent tears fall trickling from my eyes. 200

I go, ye nymphs ! those rocks and seas to prove ;
How much I fear, but ah, how much I love !

I go, ye nymphs ! where furious love inspires ;
Let female fears submit to female fires.

To rocks and seas I fly from Phaon's hate, 205
And hope from seas and rocks a milder fate.

Ye gentle gales, beneath my body blow,
And softly lay me on the waves below !

And thou, kind Love, my sinking limbs sustain,
Spread thy soft wings, and waft me o'er the main, }
Nor let a lover's death the guiltless flood profane ! }

On Phœbus' shrine my harp I'll then bestow,
And this inscription shall be plac'd below :

" Here she who sung, to him that did inspire,
Sappho to Phœbus consecrates her lyre ; 215

What suits with Sappho, Phœbus, suits with thee ;
The gift, the giver, and the god agree."

But why, alas ! relentless youth, ah why
To distant seas must tender Sappho fly ? 219

Thy charms than those may far more powerful be,
And Phœbus' self is less a god to me.

Ah ! canst thou doom me to the rocks and sea,
O far more faithless and more hard than they ?

Ah ! canst thou rather see this tender breast 224
Dash'd on these rocks than to thy bosom press'd ?

This breast which once, in vain ! you lik'd so well ;
Where the Loves play'd, and where the Muses dwell.

Alas! the Muses now no more inspire:
Untun'd my lute, and silent is my lyre;
My languid numbers have forgot to flow, 230
And fancy sinks beneath a weight of woe.
Ye Lesbian virgins, and ye Lesbian dames,
Themes of my verse, and objects of my flames,
No more your groves with my glad songs shall ring,
No more these hands shall touch the trembling string:
My Phaon's fled, and I those arts resign; 236
(Wretch that I am, to call that Phaon mine!)
Return, fair youth, return, and bring along
Joy to my soul, and vigour to my song:
Absent from thee, the poet's flame expires; 240
But ah! how fiercely burn the lover's fires!
Gods! can no pray'rs, no sighs, no numbers move
One savage heart, or teach it how to love?
The winds my pray'rs, my sighs, my numbers bear,
The flying winds have lost them all in air! 245
Oh when, alas! shall more auspicious gales
To these fond eyes restore thy welcome sails?
If you return—ah, why these long delays?
Poor Sappho dies while careless Phaon stays.
O launch thy bark, nor fear the watery plain; 250
Venus for thee shall smooth her native main.
O launch thy bark, secure of prosperous gales;
Cupid for thee shall spread the swelling sails.
If you will fly---(yet ah! what cause can be,
Too cruel youth, that you should fly from me?) 255
If not from Phaon I must hope for ease,
Ah, let me seek it from the raging seas:
To raging seas unpitied I'll remove,
And either cease to live or cease to love! 259

THE FABLE OF DRYOPE.

FROM THE
NINTH BOOK OF OVID'S METAMORPHOSES:

SHE said, and for her lost Galanthis sighs;
When the fair consort of her son replies:
“ Since you a servant's ravish'd form bemoan,
And kindly sigh for sorrows not your own,
Let me (if tears and grief permit) relate 5
A nearer woe, a sister's stranger fate.
No nymph of all Æchalia could compare
For beauteous form with Dryope the fair,
Her tender mother's only hope and pride;
(Myself the offspring of a second bride.) 10
This nymph compress'd by him who rules the day,
Whom Delphi and the Delian isle obey,
Andræmon lov'd; and bless'd in all those charms
That pleas'd a god, succeeded to her arms.
“ A lake there was with shelving banks around,
Whose verdant summit fragrant myrtles crown'd. 16
These shades, unknowing of the fates, she sought,
And to the Naiads flowery garlands brought:
Her smiling babe (a pleasing charge) she prest
Within her arms, and nourish'd at her breast. 20
Not distant far a watery lotos grows;
The spring was new, and all the verdant boughs,
Adorn'd with blossoms, promis'd fruits that vie
In glowing colours with the Tyrian dye:
Of these she cropp'd, to please her infant son, 25
And I myself the same rash act had done:
But lo! I saw (as near her side I stood)
The violated blossoms drop with blood.
Upon the tree I cast a frightful look;
The trembling tree with sudden horror shook. 30
Lotis the nymph (if rural tales be true)
As from Priapus lawless lust she flew,
Forsook her form, and, fixing here, became
A flowery plant, which still preserves her name.
“ This change unknown, astonish'd at the sight, 35
My trembling sister strove to urge her flight;

And first the pardon of the nymphs implor'd,
 And those offended sylvan powers ador'd:
 But when she backward would have fled, she found
 Her stiffening feet were rooted in the ground: 40
 In vain to free her fastened feet she strove,
 And as she struggles only moves above;
 She feels th' encroaching bark around her grow
 By quick degrees, and cover all below.
 Surpris'd at this, her trembling hand she heaves 45
 To rend her hair; her hand is fill'd with leaves:
 Where late was hair the shooting leaves are seen
 To rise, and shade her with a sudden green.
 The child Amphissus, to her bosom prest,
 Perceiv'd a colder and a harder breast, 50
 And found the springs, that ne'er till then denied
 Their milky moisture, on a sudden dried.
 I saw, unhappy! what I now relate,
 And stood the helpless witness of thy fate,
 Embrac'd thy boughs, thy rising bark delay'd, 55
 There wish'd to grow, and mingle shade with shade.

" Behold Andræmon and th' unhappy sire
 Appear, and for their Dryope inquire:
 A springing tree for Dryope they find,
 And print warm kisses on the panting rind. 60
 Prostrate, with tears their kindred plant bedew,
 And close embrace as to the roots they grew.
 The face was all that now remain'd of thee,
 No more a woman, nor yet quite a tree;
 Thy branches hung with humid pearls appear, 65
 From every leaf distils a trickling tear;
 And straight a voice, while yet a voice remains,
 Thus through the trembling boughs in sighs complains.

' If to the wretched any faith be given,
 I swear by all th' unpitying pow'rs of Heaven, 70
 No wilful crime this heavy vengeance bred;
 In mutual innocence our lives we led:
 If this be false, let these new greens decay,
 Let sounding axes lop my limbs away,
 And crackling flames on all my honours prey. 75 }

But from my branching arms this infant bear,
 Let some kind nurse supply a mother's care;
 And to his mother let him oft be led,
 Sport in her shades, and in her shades be fed:
 Teach him, when first his infant voice shall frame
 Imperfect words, and lisp his mother's name, 81
 To hail this tree; and say, with weeping eyes,
 "Within this plant my hapless parent lies:"
 And when in youth he seeks the shady woods,
 Oh! let him fly the crystal lakes and floods, 85
 Nor touch the fatal flow'rs; but, warn'd by me,
 Believe a goddess shrin'd in every tree.
 My sire, my sister, and my spouse farewell!
 If in your breasts or love or pity dwell,
 Protect your plant, nor let my branches feel 90
 The browsing cattle or the piercing steel.
 Farewell! and since I cannot bend to join
 My lips to yours, advance at least to mine.
 My son, thy mother's parting kiss receive,
 While yet thy mother has a kiss to give. 95
 I can no more; the creeping rind invades
 My closing lips, and hides my head in shades:
 Remove your hands, the bark shall soon suffice
 Without their aid to seal these dying eyes.'
 "She ceas'd at once to speak and ceas'd to be,
 And all the nymph was lost within the tree; 101
 Yet latent life through her new branches reign'd,
 And long the plant a human heat retain'd."

VERTUMNUS AND POMONA.

FROM THE

FOURTEENTH BOOK OF OVID'S METAMORPHOSES.

THE fair Pomona flourish'd in his reign;
 Of all the virgins of the sylvan train
 None taught the trees a nobler race to bear,
 Or more improv'd the vegetable care.

To her the shady grove, the flowery field, 5
The streams and fountains, no delights could yield;
'Twas all her joy the ripening fruits to tend,
And see the boughs with happy burthens bend.
The hook she bore instead of Cynthia's spear,
To lop the growth of the luxuriant year, 10
To decent forms the lawless shoots to bring,
And teach th' obedient branches where to spring.
Now the cleft rind inserted grafts receives,
And yields an offspring more than nature gives;
Now sliding streams the thirsty plains renew, 15
And feed their fibres with reviving dew.

These cares alone her virgin breast employ,
Averse from Venus and the nuptial joy.
Her private orchards, wall'd on every side,
To lawless sylvans all access denied. 20
How oft the satyrs and the wanton fawns,
Who haunt the forests or frequent the lawns,
The god whose ensign scares the birds of prey,
And old Silenus, youthful in decay,
Employ'd their wiles and unavailing care 25
To pass the fences, and surprise the fair!
Like these Vertumnus own'd his faithful flame,
Like these rejected by the scornful dame.
To gain her sight a thousand forms he wears;
And first a reaper from the field appears: 30
Sweating he walks, while loads of golden grain
O'ercharge the shoulders of the seeming swain:
Oft o'er his back a crooked scythe is laid,
And wreaths of hay his sun-burnt temples shade:
Oft in his harden'd hand a goad he bears, 35
Like one who late unyok'd the sweating steers:
Sometimes his pruning-hook corrects the vines,
And the loose stragglers to their ranks confines:
Now gathering what the bounteous year allows,
He pulls ripe apples from the bending boughs: 40
A soldier now, he with his sword appears;
A fisher next, his trembling angle bears:
Each shape he varies, and each art he tries,
On her bright charms to feast his longing eyes.

A female form at last Vertumnus wears,
With all the marks of reverend age appears,
His temples thinly spread with silver hairs:
Propp'd on his staff, and stooping as he goes,
A painted mitre shades his furrow'd brows.
The god in this decrepit form array'd 50
The gardens entered, and the fruit survey'd;
And, "Happy you!" he thus address'd the maid,
"Whose charms as far all other nymphs outshine,
As other gardens are excell'd by thine!"
Then kiss'd the fair; (his kisses warmer grow 55
Than such as women on their sex bestow)
Then plac'd beside her on the flowery ground,
Beheld the trees with autumn's bounty crown'd.
An elm was near, to whose embraces led,
The curling vine her swelling clusters spread: 60
He view'd her twining branches with delight,
And prais'd the beauty of the pleasing sight.
"Yet this tall elm, but for this vine," he said,
"Had stood neglected, and a barren shade;
And this fair vine, but that her arms surround 65
Her married elm, had crept along the ground.
Ah! beauteous maid! let this example move
Your mind averse from all the joys of love.
Deign to be lov'd, and every heart subdue!
What nymph could e'er attract such crowds as you?
Not she whose beauty urg'd the Centaur's arms, 71
Ulysses' queen, nor Helen's fatal charms.
Ev'n now, when silent scorn is all they gain,
A thousand court you, though they court in vain,
A thousand sylvans, demigods, and gods, 75
That haunt our mountains and our Alban woods.
But if you'll prosper, mark what I advise,
Whom age and long experience render wise,
And one whose tender care is far above
All that these lovers ever felt of love, 80
(Far more than e'er can by yourself be guess'd;)
Fix on Vertumnus, and reject the rest:
For his firm faith I dare engage my own;
Scarce to himself himself is better known.

To distant lands Vertumnus never roves; 85
 Like you, contented with his native groves;
 Nor at first sight, like most, admires the fair;
 For you he lives; and you alone shall share
 His last affection as his early care.
 Besides, he's lovely far above the rest, 90
 With youth immortal, and with beauty blest.
 Add, that he varies every shape with ease,
 And tries all forms that may Pomona please.
 But what should most excite a mutual flame,
 Your rural cares and pleasures are the same. 95
 To him your orchard's early fruits are due;
 (A pleasing offering when 'tis made by you:)
 He values these; but yet, alas! complains
 That still the best and dearest gift remains.
 Not the fair fruit that on yon branches glows 100
 With that ripe red th' autumnal sun bestows;
 Nor tasteful herbs that in these gardens rise,
 Which the kind soil with 'milky sap supplies;
 You, only you, can move the god's desire;
 Oh! crown so constant and so pure a fire! 105
 Let soft compassion touch your gentle mind;
 Think 'tis Vertumnus begs you to be kind:
 So may no frost, when early buds appear,
 Destroy the promise of the youthful year;
 Nor winds, when first your florid orchard blows, 110
 Shake the light blossoms from their blasted boughs!"

This when the various god had urg'd in vain,
 He straight assum'd his native form again:
 Such, and so bright an aspect now he bears,
 As when through clouds th' emerging sun appears,
 And thence exerting his refulgent ray, 116
 Dispels the darkness, and reveals the day.
 Force he prepar'd, but check'd the rash design;
 For when, appearing in a form divine,
 The nymph surveys him, and beholds the grace 120
 Of charming features and a youthful face,
 In her soft breast consenting passions move,
 And the warm maid confess'd a mutual love. 123

THE
TEMPLE OF FAME.

WRITTEN IN THE YEAR 1711.

ADVERTISEMENT.

The hint of the following piece was taken from Chaucer's House of Fame. The design is in a manner entirely altered, the descriptions and most of the particular thoughts my own: yet I could not suffer it to be printed without this acknowledgement. The reader who would compare this with Chaucer, may begin with his third book of Fame, there being nothing in the two first books that answer to their title.

IN that soft season, when descending showers
Call forth the greens, and wake the rising flowers;
When opening buds salute the welcome day,
And earth relenting feels the genial ray;
As balmy sleep had charm'd my cares to rest, 5
And love itself was banish'd from my breast,
(What time the morn mysterious visions brings,
While purer slumbers spread their golden wings)
A train of phantoms in wild order rose,
And join'd, this intellectual scene compose. 10
I stood, methought, betwixt earth, seas, and
skies,

The whole creation open to my eyes:
In air self-balanç'd hung the globe below,
Where mountains rise and circling oceans flow;
Here naked rocks, and empty wastes were seen, 15
There towery cities, and the forests green;
Here sailing ships delight the wandering eyes,
There trees and intermingled temples rise:
Now a clear sun the shining scene displays,
The transient landscape now in clouds decays. 20

O'er the wide prospect as I gaz'd around,
Sudden I heard a wild promiscuous sound,
Like broken thunders that at distance roar,
Or billows murmuring on the hollow shore:
Then gazing up, a glorious pile beheld, 25
Whose towering summit ambient clouds conceal'd.
High on a rock of ice the structure lay,
Steep its ascent, and slippery was the way;

The wondrous rock like Parian marble shone,
And seem'd, to distant sight, of solid stone. 30
Inscriptions here of various names I view'd,
The greater part by hostile time subdued;
Yet wide was spread their fame in ages past,
And poets once had promis'd they should last.
Some fresh engrav'd appear'd of wits renown'd; 35
I look'd again, nor could their trace be found.
Critics I saw that other names deface,
And fix their own, with labour, in their place:
Their own, like others, soon their place resign'd,
Or disappear'd, and left the first behind. 40
Nor was the work impair'd by storms alone,
But felt th' approaches of too warm a sun;
For fame, impatient of extremes, decays
Not more by envy than excess of praise.
Yet part no injuries of heav'n could feel, 45
Like crystal faithful to the graving steel:
The rock's high summit, in the temple's shade,
Nor heat could melt, nor beating storm invade.
Their names inscrib'd unnumber'd ages past
From time's first birth, with time itself shall last;
These ever new, nor subject to decays, 51
Spread, and grow brighter with the length of days.
So Zembla's rocks (the beauteous work of frost)
Rise white in air, and glitter o'er the coast;
Pale suns, unfelt, at distance roll away, 55
And on th' impassive ice the lightnings play:
Eternal snows the growing mass supply,
Till the bright mountains prop th' incumbent sky:
As Atlas fix'd, each hoary pile appears,
The gather'd winter of a thousand years. 60
On this foundation Fame's high temple stands;
Stupendous pile! not rear'd by mortal hands,
Whate'er proud Rome or artful Greece beheld,
Or elder Babylon, its frame excell'd.
Four faces had the dome, and every face 65
Of various structure, but of equal grace:
Four brazen gates, on columns lifted high,
Salute the different quarters of the sky,

Here fabled chiefs in darker ages born,
 Or worthies old, whom arms or arts adorn, 70
 Who cities rais'd, or tam'd a monstrous race,
 The walls in venerable order grace;
 Heroes in animated marble frown,
 And legislators seem to think in stone.

Westward, a sumptuous frontispiece appear'd 75
 On Doric pillars of white marble rear'd,
 Crown'd with an architrave of antique mould,
 And sculpture rising on the roughen'd gold.
 In shaggy spoils here Theseus was beheld,
 And Perseus dreadful with Minerva's shield: 80
 There great Alcides, stooping with his toil,
 Rests on his club, and holds th' Hesperian spoil:
 Here Orpheus sings; trees moving to the sound
 Start from their roots, and form a shade around:
 Amphion there the loud creating lyre 85
 Strikes, and beholds a sudden Thebes aspire!
 Cythæron's echoes answer to his call,
 And half the mountain rolls into a wall:
 There might you see the lengthening spires ascend,
 The domes swell up, the widening arches bend, 90
 The growing tow'rs, like exhalations, rise,
 And the huge columns heave into the skies.

The eastern front was glorious to behold,
 With diamond flaming, and barbaric gold.
 There Ninus shone, who spread th' Assyrian fame,
 And the great founder of the Persian name: 96
 There in long robes the royal magi stand,
 Grave Zoroaster waves the circling wand;
 The sage Chaldeans rob'd in white appear'd,
 And brachmans, deep in desert woods rever'd. 100
 These stopp'd the moon, and call'd th' unbody'd
 shades

To midnight banquets in the glimmering glades;
 Made visionary fabrics round them rise,
 And airy spectres skim before their eyes;
 Of talismans and sigils knew the pow'r, 105
 And careful watch'd the planetary hour.

Superior, and alone, Confucius stood,
Who taught that useful science,—to be good. 110

But on the south, a long majestic race
Of Egypt's priests the gilded niches grace,
Who measur'd earth, describ'd the starry spheres,
And trac'd the long records of lunar years.

High on his car Sesostris struck my view,
Whom scepter'd slaves in golden harness drew:
His hands a bow and pointed javelin hold; 115
His giant limbs are arm'd in scales of gold.

Between the statues obelisks were plac'd,
And the learn'd walls with hieroglyphics grac'd.

Of Gothic structure was the northern side,
O'erwrought with ornaments of barbarous pride. 120

There huge Colosses rose, with trophies crown'd,
And runic characters were grav'd around;

There sat Xamolxis with erected eyes,
And Odin here in mimic trances dies.

There on rude iron columns, smear'd with blood, 125

The horrid forms of Scythian heroes stood,
Druids and bards, (their once loud harps unstrung)
And youths that died to be by poets sung.

These and a thousand more of doubtful fame,
To whom old fables gave a lasting name, 130

In ranks adorn'd the temple's outward face;

The wall in lustre and effect like glass,
Which o'er each object casting various dyes,

Enlarges some, and others multiplies:

Nor void of emblem was the mystic wall, 135

For thus romantic fame increases all.

The temple shakes, the sounding gates unfold,
Wide vaults appear, and roofs of fretted gold.

Rais'd on a thousand pillars, wreath'd around:
With laurel foliage, and with eagles crown'd: 140

Of bright transparent beryl were the walls,

The friezes gold, and gold the capitals:

As heav'n with stars, the roof with jewels glows,
And ever-living lamps depend in rows.

Full in the passage of each spacious gate, 145

The sage historians in white garments wait;

Grav'd o'er their seats the form of Time was found,
His scythe revers'd, and both his pinions bound.
Within stood heroes, who, through loud alarms,
In bloody fields pursued renown in arms. 150
High on a throne, with trophies charg'd, I view'd
The youth that all things but himself subdued:
His feet on sceptres and tiaras trod,
And his horn'd head bely'd the Libyan god.
There Cæsar, grac'd with both Minervas, shone; 155
Cæsar, the world's great master, and his own;
Unmov'd, superior still in every state,
And scarce detested in his country's fate.
But chief were those who not for empire fought,
But with their toils their peoples' safety bought; 160
High o'er the rest Epaminondas stood;
Timoleon, glorious in his brother's blood;
Bold Scipio, saviour of the Roman state,
Great in his triumphs, in retirement great; 164
And wise Aurelius, in whose well-taught mind
With boundless pow'r unbounded virtue join'd,
His own strict judge and patron of mankind.

Much suffering heroes next their honours claim,
Those of less noisy and less guilty fame,
Fair Virtue's silent train: supreme of these 170
Here ever shines the god-like Socrates;
He whom ungrateful Athens could expel,
At all times just, but when he sign'd the shell:
Here his abode the martyr'd Phocion claims,
With Agis, not the last of Spartan names: 175
Unconquer'd Cato shews the wound he tore,
And Brutus his ill genius meets no more.

But in the centre of the hallowed choir,
Six pompous columns o'er the rest aspire;
Around the shrine itself of Fame they stand, 180
Hold the chief honours, and the fanè command.
High on the first the mighty Homer shone,
Eternal adamant composed his throne;
Father of verse! in holy fillets drest,
His silver beard wav'd gently o'er his breast; 185

Though blind, a boldness in his looks appears;
 In years he seem'd but not impair'd by years.
 The wars of Troy were round the pillars seen:
 Here fierce Tydides wounds the Cyprian queen:
 Here Hector, glorious from Patroclus' fall; 190
 Here, dragg'd in triumph round the Trojan wall.
 Motion and life did every part inspire,
 Bold was the work, and prov'd the master's fire;
 A strong expression most he seem'd t' affect,
 And here and there disclos'd a brave neglect. 195

A golden column next in rank appear'd,
 On which a shrine of purest gold was rear'd;
 Finish'd the whole, and labour'd every part
 With patient touches of unwearied art:
 The Mantuan there in sober triumph sate, 200
 Compos'd his posture, and his look sedate;
 On Homer still he fix'd a reverend eye,
 Great without pride, in modest majesty.
 In living sculpture on the sides were spread
 The Latian wars and haughty Turnus dead; 205
 Eliza stretch'd upon the funeral pyre;
 Æneas bending with his aged sire:
 Troy flam'd in burning gold, and o'er the throne,
 'Arms and the man' in golden cyphers shone.

Four swans sustain a car of silver bright, 210
 With heads advanc'd, and pinions stretch'd for
 flight;

Here, like some furious prophet, Pindar rode,
 And seem'd to labour with th' inspiring god.
 Across the harp a careless hand he flings,
 And boldly sinks into the sounding strings. 215
 The figur'd games of Greece the column grace,
 Neptune and Jove survey the rapid race.
 The youths hang o'er their chariots as they run;
 The fiery steeds seem starting from the stone;
 The champions in distorted postures threat; 220
 And all appear'd irregularly great.

Here happy Horace tun'd th' Ausonian lyre
 To sweeter sounds, and temper'd Pindar's fire;

Pleas'd with Alceus' manly rage t' infuse
The softer spirit of the Sapphic muse. 225
The polish'd pillar different sculptures grace,
A work outlasting monumental brass.
Here smiling Loves and Bacchanals appear,
The Julian star, and great Augustus here?
The doves that round the infant poet spread 230
Myrtles and bays, hang hovering o'er his head.
Here, in a shrine that cast a dazzling light,
Sate fix'd in thought the mighty Stagirite;
His sacred head a radiant zodiac crown'd,
And various animals his sides surround; 235
His piercing eyes, erect, appear to view
Superior worlds, and look all nature through.

With equal rays immortal Tully shone,
The Roman rostra deck'd the consul's throne:
Gathering his flowing robe, he seem'd to stand 240
In act to speak, and graceful stretch'd his hand.
Behind, Rome's genius waits with civic crowns,
And the great father of his country owns.

These massy columns in a circle rise,
O'er which a pompous dome invades the skies: 245
Scarce to the top I stretch'd my aching sight,
So large it spread, and swell'd to such a height,
Full in the midst proud Fame's imperial seat
With jewels blaz'd, magnificently great;
The vivid emeralds there revive the eye, 250
The flaming rubies shew their sanguine dye,
Bright azure rays from lively sapphires stream,
And lucid amber casts a golden gleam.
With various colour'd light the pavement shone,
And all on fire appear'd the glowing throne; 255
The dome's high arch reflects the mingled blaze,
And forms a rainbow of alternate rays.
When on the goddess first I cast my sight,
Scarce seem'd her stature of a cubit's height;
But swell'd to larger size, the more I gaz'd, 260
Till to the roof her towering front she rais'd.
With her the temple every moment grew,
And ampler vistas open'd to my view:

Upward the columns shoot, the roofs ascend,
And arches widen, and long aisles extend. 265
Such was her form, as ancient bards have told,
Wings raise her arms, and wings her feet unfold;
A thousand busy tongues the goddess bears,
A thousand open eyes, and thousand listening
ears.

Beneath in order rang'd, the tuneful Nine 270
(Her virgin handmaids) still attend the shrine;
With eyes on Fame for ever fix'd, they sing;
For fame they raise the voice, and tune the string;
With Time's first birth began the heav'nly lays,
And last, eternal, through the length of days. 275

Around these wonders as I cast a look,
The trumpet sounded, and the temple shook,
And all the nations summon'd at the call,
From different quarters fill the crowded hall:
Of various tongues the mingled sounds were heard;
In various garbs promiscuous throngs appear'd; 281
Thick as the bees that with the spring renew
Their flowery toils, and sip the fragrant dew,
When the wing'd colonies first tempt the sky,
O'er dusky fields and shaded waters fly, 285
Or settling, seize the sweets the blossoms yield,
And a low murmur runs along the field.

Millions of suppliant crowds the shrine attend,
And all degrees before the goddess bend;
The poor, the rich, the valiant, and the sage, 290
And boasting youth, and narrative old age.
Their pleas were different, their request the same;
For good and bad alike are fond of fame.
Some she disgrac'd, and some with honours crown'd;
Unlike successes equal merits found. 295

Thus her blind sister, fickle Fortune, reigns,
And, undiscerning, scatters crowns and chains.
First at the shrine the learned world appear,
And to the goddess thus prefer their pray'r.
"Long have we sought t' instruct and please mankind,
With studies pale, with midnight vigils blind; 301

But thank'd by few, rewarded yet by none,
We here appeal to thy superior throne:
On wit and learning the just prize bestow,
For fame is all we must expect below." 305

The goddess heard, and bade the Muses raise
The golden trumpet of eternal praise:
From pole to pole the winds diffuse the sound,
That fills the circuit of the world around;
Not all at once, as thunder breaks the cloud, 310
The notes at first were rather sweet than loud;
By just degrees they every moment rise,
Fill the wide earth, and gain upon the skies.
At every breath were balmy odours shed,
Which still grew sweeter as they wider spread; 315
Less fragrant scents th' unfolding rose exhales,
Or spices breathing in Arabian gales.

Next these the good and just, an awful train,
Thus on their knees address'd the sacred fane: 320
"Since living virtue is with envy curs'd,
And the best men are treated like the worst,
Do thou, just goddess, call our merits forth,
And give each deed th' exact intrinsic worth."
"Not with bare justice shall your act be crown'd,
(Said Fame,) but high above desert renown'd: 325
Let fuller notes th' applauding world amaze,
And the loud clarion labour in your praise."

This band dismiss'd behold another crowd
Preferr'd the same request, and lowly bow'd;
The constant tenor of whose well-spent days 330
No less deserv'd a just return of praise.
But straight the direful trump of slander sounds;
Through the big dome the doubling thunder bounds;
Loud as the burst of cannon rends the skies,
The dire report through every region flies, 335
In every ear incessant rumours rung,
And gathering scandals grew on every tongue.
From the black trumpet's rusty concave broke
Sulphureous flames, and clouds of rolling smoke:
The poisonous vapour blots the purple skies, 340
And withers all before it as it flies.

A troop came next who crowns and armour wore,
And proud defiance in their looks they bore:

"For thee (they cried) amidst alarms and strife,
We sail'd in tempests down the stream of life; 345
For thee whole nations fill'd with flames and blood,
And swam to empire through the purple flood.

Those ills we dar'd, thy inspiration own,
What virtue seem'd, was done for thee alone."

"Ambitious fools! (the queen replied, and frown'd,
Be all your acts in dark oblivion drown'd; 351

There sleep forgot, with mighty tyrants gone,
Your statues moulder'd, and your names unknown!"
A sudden cloud straight snatch'd them from my
sight,

And each majestic phantom sunk in night. 355

Then came the smallest tribe I yet had seen;
Plain was their dress and modest was their mien.

"Great Idol of mankind! we neither claim
The praise of merit, nor aspire to fame;
But safe in deserts from th' applause of men, 360

Would die unheard of, as we liv'd unseen;
'Tis all we beg thee, to conceal from sight
Those acts of goodness which themselves requite.
O, let us still the secret joy partake,
To follow virtue ev'n for virtue's sake!" 365

"And live there men who slight immortal fame?
Who then with incense shall adore our name?
But, mortals! know, 'tis still our greatest pride
To blaze those virtues which the good would hide.
Rise! Muses, rise! add all your tuneful breath, 370
These must not sleep in darkness and in death."

She said: in air the trembling music floats,
And on the winds triumphant swell the notes;
So soft, though high, so loud, and yet so clear,
Ev'n listening angels lean'd from heav'n to hear: 375
To farthest shores th' ambrosial spirit flies,
Sweet to the world, and grateful to the skies.

Next these a youthful train their vows express'd,
With feathers crown'd, with gay embroidery dress'd:

“ Hither (they cried) direct your eyes, and see 380
 The men of pleasure, dress, and gallantry;
 Ours is the place at banquets, balls, and plays,
 Sprightly our nights, polite are all our days;
 Courts we frequent, where 'tis our pleasing care
 To pay due visits, and address the fair; 385
 In fact 'tis true no nymph we could persuade,
 But still in fancy vanquish'd every maid;
 Of unknown duchesses lewd tales we tell,
 Yet, would the world believe us, all were well;
 The joy let others have, and we the name, 390
 And what we want in pleasure, grant in fame.
 The queen assents; the trumpet rends the skies,
 And at each blast a lady's honour dies.
 Pleas'd with the strange success, vast numbers

prest

Around the shrine, and made the same request: 395
 “ What you (she cried), unlearn'd in arts to please;
 Slaves to yourselves, and ev'n fatigued with ease,
 Who lose a length of undeserving days,
 Would you usurp the lover's dear bought praise?
 To just contempt, ye vain pretenders! fall, 400
 The people's fable, and the scorn of all.”

Straight the black clarion sends a horrid sound,
 Loud laughs burst out, and bitter scoffs fly round,
 Whispers are heard, with taunts reviling loud,
 And scornful hisses run through all the crowd. 405

Last, those who boast of mighty mischiefs done,
 Enslave their country, or usurp a throne;
 Or who their glory's dire foundation laid
 On sovereigns ruin'd, or on friends betray'd;
 Calm, thinking villains, whom no faith could fix,
 Of crooked counsels and dark politics; 411
 Of these a gloomy tribe surround the throne,
 And beg to make th' immortal treasons known.
 The trumpet roars, long flaky flames expire,
 With sparks that seem'd to set the world on fire.
 At the dread sound pale mortals stood aghast. 416
 And startled Nature trembled with the blast.

This having heard and seen, some pow'r unknown
Straight chang'd the scene, and snatch'd me from the
throne.

Before my view appear'd a structure fair, 420
Its site uncertain, if in earth or air;
With rapid motion turn'd the mansion round;
With ceaseless noise the ringing walls resound:
Not less in number were the spacious doors
Than leaves on trees, or sands upon the shores; 425
Which still unfolded stand, by night, by day,
Pervious to winds, and open every way.
As flames by nature to the skies ascend,
As weighty bodies to the centre tend,
As to the sea returning rivers roll, 430
And the touch'd needle trembles to the pole;
Hither, as to their proper place, arise
All various sounds from earth, and seas, and skies,
Or spoke aloud, or whisper'd in the ear;
Nor ever silence, rest, or peace is here. 435
As on the smooth expanse of crystal lakes
The sinking stone at first a circle makes,
The trembling surface by the motion stirr'd,
Spreads in a second circle, then a third;
Wide, and more wide, the floating rings advance,
Fill all the watery plain, and to the margin dance:
Thus every voice and sound, when first they break
On neighbouring air, a soft impression make;
Another ambient circle then they move;
That, in its turn, impels the next above; 445
Through undulating air the sounds are sent,
And spread o'er all the fluid element.

There various news I heard of love and strife,
Of peace and war, health, sickness, death, and life,
Of loss and gain, of famine and of store, 450
Of storms at sea, and travels on the shore,
Of prodigies, and portents seen in air,
Of fires and plagues, and stars with blazing hair,
Of turns of fortune, changes in the state,
The falls of favourites, projects of the great, 455

Of old mismanagements, taxations new;
All neither wholly false, nor wholly true.

Above, below, without, within, around,
Confus'd, unnumber'd multitudes are found,
Who pass, repass, advance, and glide away, 460
Hosts rais'd by fear, and phantoms of a day:
Astrologers, that future fates foresaw,
Projectors, quacks, and lawyers not a few;
And priests and party-zealots, numerous bands,
With home-born lies, or tales from foreign lands,
Each talk'd aloud, or in some secret place, 466
And wild impatience star'd in every face.

The flying rumours gather'd as they roll'd,
Scarce any tale was sooner heard than told;
And all who told it added something new, 470
And all who heard it, made enlargements too;
In every ear it spread, on every tongue it grew. }
Thus flying east and west, and north and south,
News travell'd with increase from mouth to mouth.
So from a spark, that kindled first by chance, 475
With gathering force the quickening flames ad-
vance;

Till to the clouds their curling heads aspire,
And towers and temples sink in floods of fire.

When thus ripe lies are to perfection sprung,
Full grown, and fit to grace a mortal tongue, 480
Through thousand vents, impatient, forth they flow,
And rush in millions on the world below:

Fame sits aloft, and points them out their course,
Their date determines, and prescribes their force;
Some to remain, and some to perish soon, 485
Or wane and wax alternate like the moon.
Around a thousand winged wonders fly,
Borne by the trumpet's blast, and scatter'd through
the sky.

There, at one passage, oft you might survey
A lie and truth contending for the way; 490
And long 'twas doubtful, both so closely pent,
Which first should issue through the narrow vent:

At last agreed, together out they fly,
Inseparable now the truth and lie;
The strict companions are for ever join'd, 495
And this or that unmix'd, no mortal e'er shall find.

While thus I stood, intent to see and hear,
One came, methought, and whisper'd in my ear,
"What could thus high thy rash ambition raise?
Art thou, fond youth, a candidate for praise?" 500

"'Tis true, (said I) not void of hopes I came,
For who so fond as youthful bards of fame?
But few, alas! the casual blessing boast,
So hard to gain, so easy to be lost.

How vain that second life in other's breath, 505
Th' estate which wits inherit after death!

Ease, health, and life, for this they must resign,
(Unsure the tenure, but how vast the fine!)
The great man's curse, without the gains, endure,
Be envied, wretched; and be flatter'd, poor; 510

All luckless wits their enemies profest,
And all successful, jealous friends at best.
Nor fame I slight, nor for her favours call;
She comes unlook'd for, if she comes at all.
But if the purchase costs so dear a price, 515

As soothing folly, or exalting vice;
Oh! if the Muse must flatter lawless sway,
And follow still where fortune leads the way;
Or if no basis bear my rising name,
But the fall'n ruins of another's fame; 520

Then teach me, Heav'n! to scorn the guilty bays,
Drive from my breast that wretched lust of praise;
Unblemish'd let me live, or die unknown:
Oh! grant an honest fame, or grant me none!" 524

JANUARY AND MAY;

OR,

THE MERCHANT'S TALE.

FROM CHAUCER.

THERE liv'd in Lombardy, as authors write,
In days of old, a wise and worthy knight;
Of gentle manners, as of generous race,
Blest with much sense, more riches, and some grace:
Yet, led astray by Venus' soft delights, 5
He scarce could rule some idle appetites:
For long ago, let priests say what they could,
Weak sinful laymen were but flesh and blood.

But in due time, when sixty years were o'er,
He vow'd to lead this vicious life no more; 10
Whether pure holiness inspir'd his mind,
Or dotage turn'd his brain, is hard to find;
But his high courage prick'd him forth to wed,
And try the pleasures of a lawful bed.
This was his nightly dream, his daily care, 15
And to the heavenly powers his constant prayer,
Once, ere he died, to taste the blissful life
Of a kind husband and a loving wife.

These thoughts he fortified with reasons still,
(For none want reasons to confirm their will.) 20
Grave authors say, and witty poets sing,
That honest wedlock is a glorious thing:
But depth of judgment most in him appears,
Who wisely weds in his maturer years.
Then let him chuse a damsel young and fair, 25
To bless his age, and bring a worthy heir;
To sooth his cares, and, free from noise and strife,
Conduct him gently to the verge of life.
Let sinful bachelors their woes deplore,
Full well they merit all they feel, and more: 30
Unaw'd by precepts, human or divine,
Like birds and beasts, promiscuously they join;
Nor know to make the present blessing last,
To hope the future, or esteem the past:

But vainly boast the joys they never tried, 35
 And find divulg'd the secrets they would hide.
 The married man may bear his yoke with ease,
 Secure at once himself and Heav'n to please;
 And pass his inoffensive hours away,
 In bliss all night, and innocence all day: 40
 Though fortune change, his constant spouse remains,
 Augments his joys, or mitigates his pains.

But what so pure which envious tongues will spare?
 Some wicked wits have libell'd all the fair.
 With matchless impudence they style a wife, 45
 The dear-bought curse, and lawful plague of life;
 A bosom serpent, a domestic evil,
 A night-invasion, and a mid-day devil.
 Let not the wise these slanderous words regard,
 But curse the bones of every lying bard. 50
 All other goods by fortune's hand are given,
 A wife is the peculiar gift of Heaven.
 Vain fortune's favours, never at a stay,
 Like empty shadows, pass and glide away;
 One solid comfort, our eternal wife, 55
 Abundantly supplies us all our life:
 This blessing lasts (if those who try say true)
 As long as heart can wish—and longer too.

Our grandsire Adam, ere of Eve possest,
 Alone, and ev'n in paradise unblest, 60
 With mournful looks the blissful scene survey'd,
 And wander'd in the solitary shade.
 The Maker saw, took pity, and bestow'd
 Woman, the last, the best reserv'd of God.
 A wife! ah, gentle deities! can he 65
 That has a wife e'er feel adversity?
 Would men but follow what the sex advise,
 All things would prosper, all the world grow wise.
 'Twas by Rebecca's aid that Jacob won
 His father's blessing from an elder son: 70
 Abusive Nabal ow'd his forfeit life
 To the wise conduct of a prudent wife:
 Heroic Judith, as old Hebrews shew,
 Preserv'd the Jews, and slew th' Assyrian foe:

At Esther's suit the persecuting sword 75
Was sheath'd, and Israel liv'd to bless the Lord.

These weighty motives January the sage
Maturely ponder'd in his riper age;
And, charm'd with virtuous joys, and sober life,
Would try that Christian comfort, call'd a wife. 80
His friends were summon'd on a point so nice
To pass their judgment, and to give advice;
But fix'd before, and well resolv'd was he,
(As men that ask advice are wont to be.)

"My friends," he cried (and cast a mournful look
Around the room, and sigh'd before he spoke), 86
Beneath the weight of threescore years I bend,
And, worn with cares, am hastening to my end:
How I have liv'd, alas! you know too well,
In worldly follies which I blush to tell; 90
But gracious Heav'n has op'd my eyes at last,
With due regret I view my vices past,
And, as the precept of the church decrees,
Will take a wife, and live in holy ease:
But since by counsel all things should be done, 95
And many heads are wiser still than one;
Chuse you for me, who best shall be content
When my desire's approv'd by your consent.

One caution yet is needful to be told
To guide your choice; this wife must not be old.
There goes a saying, and 'twas shrewdly said, 101
Old fish at table, but young flesh in bed.
My soul abhors the tasteless, dry embrace
Of a stale virgin with a winter face;
In that cold season love but treats his guest 105
With bean straw, and tough forage at the best.
No crafty widows shall approach my bed;
Those are too wise for bachelors to wed.
As subtle clerks by many schools are made,
Twice married dames are mistresses o' th' trade: 110
But young and tender virgins, rul'd with ease,
We form like wax, and mould them as we please.

"Conceive me, sirs, nor take my sense amiss;
'Tis what concerns my soul's eternal bliss;

Since if I found no pleasure in my spouse, 115
 As flesh is frail, and who (God help me) knows?
 'Then should I live in lewd adultery,
 And sink downright to Satan when I die:
 Or were I curs'd with an unfruitful bed,
 The righteous end were lost for which I wed; 120
 To raise up seed to bless the pow'rs above,
 And not for pleasure only, or for love.
 Think not I dote; 'tis time to take a wife,
 When vigorous blood forbids a chaster life:
 Those that are blest with store of grace divine, 125
 May live like saints by Heav'n's consent and mine.

And since I speak of wedlock, let me say,
 (As, thank my stars, in modest truth I may)
 My limbs are active, still I'm sound at heart,
 And a new vigour springs in every part. 130
 Think not my virtue lost, though time has shed
 These reverend honours on my hoary head;
 Thus trees are crown'd with blossoms white as
 snow,

The vital sap then rising from below.
 Old as I am, my lusty limbs appear 135
 Like winter greens, that flourish all the year.
 Now, sirs, ye know to what I stand inclin'd,
 Let every friend with freedom speak his mind."

He said; the rest in different parts divide;
 The knotty point was urg'd on either side: 140
 Marriage, the theme on which they all declaim'd,
 Some prais'd with wit, and some with reason blam'd.
 Till, what with proofs, objections, and replies,
 Each wondrous positive, and wondrous wise,
 There fell between his brothers a debate: 145
 Placebo this was call'd, and Justin that.

First to the knight Placebo thus begun,
 (Mild were his looks, and pleasing was his tone)
 "Such prudence, sir, in all your words appears,
 As plainly proves experience dwells with years; 150
 Yet you pursue sage Solomon's advice,
 To work by counsel when affairs are nice:

But, with the wise man's leave, I must protest,
 So may my soul arrive at ease and rest,
 As still I hold your own advice the best.

155

“ Sir, I have liv'd a courtier all my days,
 And studied men, their manners, and their ways;
 And have observ'd this useful maxim still,
 To let my betters always have their will.
 Nay, if my lord affirm'd that black was white, 160
 My word was this, ‘ Your honour's in the right.’
 Th' assuming wit, who deems himself so wise,
 As his mistaken patron to advise,
 Let him not dare to vent his dangerous thought;
 A noble fool was never in a fault. 165

This, sir, affects not you, whose every word
 Is weigh'd with judgment, and befits a lord:
 Your will is mine; and is (I will maintain)
 Pleasing to God, and should be so to man;
 At least, your courage all the world must praise, 170
 Who dare to wed in your declining days.
 Indulge the vigour of your mounting blood,
 And let grey fools be indolently good,
 Who, past all pleasures, damn the joys of sense
 With reverend dulness and grave impotence.” 175

Justin, who silent sate, and heard the man,
 Thus, with a philosophic frown, began:—

“ A heathen author, of the first degree,
 (Who, though not faith, had sense as well as we)
 Bids us be certain our concerns to trust 180
 To those of generous principles and just.
 The venture's greater, I'll presume to say,
 To give your person, than your goods away:
 And therefore, sir, as you regard your rest,
 First learn your lady's qualities at least: 185
 Whether she's chaste or rampant, proud or civil,
 Meek as a saint, or haughty as the devil;
 Whether an easy, fond, familiar fool,
 Or such a wit as no man e'er can rule,
 'Tis true, perfection none must hope to find 190
 In all this world, much less in womankind:

But if her virtues prove the larger share,
 Bless the kind fates, and think your fortune rare.
 Ah, gentle sir, take warning of a friend,
 Who knows too well the state you thus commend;
 And spite of all his praises must declare, 196
 All he can find is bondage, cost, and care.
 Heav'n knows I shed full many a private tear,
 And sigh in silence, lest the world should hear;
 While all my friends applaud my blissful life, 200
 And swear no mortal's happier in a wife;
 Demure and chaste as any vestal nun,
 The meekest creature that beholds the sun!
 But, by th' immortal powers, I feel the pain,
 And he that smarts has reason to complain. 205
 Do what you list for me; you must be sage,
 And cautious sure; for wisdom is in age:
 But at these years to venture on the fair!
 By him who made the ocean, earth, and air,
 To please a wife, when her occasions call, 210
 Would busy the most vigorous of us all.
 And trust me, sir, the chastest you can choose
 Will ask observance, and exact her dues.
 If what I speak my noble lord offend,
 My tedious sermon here is at an end." 215
 "'Tis well, 'tis wondrous well," the knight replies,
 "Most worthy kinsman, faith, you're mighty wise!
 We, sirs, are fools; and must resign the cause
 To heathenish authors, proverbs, and old saws."
 He spoke with scorn, and turn'd another way:— 220
 "What does my friend, my dear Placebo, say?"
 "I say," quoth he, "by Heav'n, the man's to
 blame,
 To slander wives, and wedlock's holy name."
 At this the council rose, without delay;
 Each, in his own opinion, went his way; 225
 With full consent, that, all disputes appeas'd,
 The knight should marry, when and where he pleas'd.
 Who now but January exults with joy?
 The charms of wedlock all his soul employ:

Each nymph by turns his wavering mind possest, 230
And reign'd the short-liv'd tyrant of his breast ;
Whilst fancy pictur'd every lively part,
And each bright image wander'd o'er his heart.

Thus, in some public forum fix'd on high,
A mirror shows the figures moving by ; 235
Still one by one, in swift succession, pass
The gliding shadows o'er the polish'd glass.

This lady's charms the nicest could not blame,
But vile suspicions had aspers'd her fame ;
That was with sense, but not with virtue blest ; 240
And one had grace, that wanted all the rest.

Thus doubting long what nymph he should obey,
He fix'd at last upon the youthful May.

Her faults he knew not, love is always blind,
But every charm revolv'd within his mind : 245

Her tender age, her form divinely fair,
Her easy motion, her attractive air,
Her sweet behaviour, her enchanting face,
Her moving softness, and majestic grace.

Much in his prudence did our knight rejoice, 250
And thought no mortal could dispute his choice.

Once more in haste he summon'd every friend,
And told them all their pains were at an end.
"Heav'n, that (said he) inspir'd me first to wed,
Provides a consort worthy of my bed : 255

Let none oppose th' election, since on this
Depends my quiet, and my future bliss.

"A dame there is, the darling of my eyes,
Young, beauteous, artless, innocent, and wise ;
Chaste, though not rich ; and, though not nobly
born, 260

Of honest parents, and may serve my turn.
Her will I wed, if gracious Heav'n so please,
To pass my age in sanctity and ease ;

And thank the powers, I may possess alone
The lovely prize, and share my bliss with none ! 265
If you, my friends, this virgin can procure,
My joys are full, my happiness is sure.

“ One only doubt remains: full oft I’ve heard,
 By casuists grave, and deep divines averr’d,
 That ’tis too much for human race to know 270
 The bliss of Heaven above, and earth below:
 Now should the nuptial pleasures prove so great,
 To match the blessings of the future state,
 Those endless joys were ill exchang’d for these;
 Then clear this doubt, and set my mind at ease.” 275

This Justin heard, nor could his spleen control,
 Touch’d to the quick, and tickled at the soul.
 “ Sir knight,” he cried, “ if this be all you dread,
 Heav’n put it past your doubt whene’er you wed;
 And to my fervent prayers so far consent, 280
 That ere the rites are o’er, you may repent!
 Good Heav’n, no doubt, the nuptial state approves,
 Since it chastises still what best it loves.
 Then be not, sir, abandoned to despair;
 Seek, and perhaps you’ll find amongst the fair, 285 }
 One, that may do your business to a hair;
 Not e’en in wish your happiness delay,
 But prove the scourge to lash you on your way:
 Then to the skies your mounting soul shall go,
 Swift as an arrow soaring from the bow! 290
 Provided still, you moderate your joy,
 Nor in your pleasures all your might employ.
 Let reason’s rule your strong desires abate,
 Nor please too lavishly your gentle mate.
 Old wives there are, of judgment most acute, 295
 Who solve these questions beyond all dispute;
 Consult with those, and be of better cheer;
 Marry, do penance, and dismiss your fear.”

So said, they rose, nor more the work delay’d;
 The match was offer’d, the proposals made. 300
 The parents, you may think, would soon comply;
 The old have interest ever in their eye.

Nor was it hard to move the lady’s mind;
 When fortune favours, still the fair are kind.

I pass each previous settlement and deed, 305
 Too long for me to write, or you to read;

Nor will with quaint impertinence display
 The pomp, the pageantry, the proud array.
 The time approach'd; to church the parties went,
 At once with carnal and devout intent: 310
 Forth came the priest, and bade th' obedient wife
 Like Sarah or Rebecca lead her life;
 Then pray'd the powers the fruitful bed to bless,
 And made all sure enough with holiness.

And now the palace-gates are open'd wide, 315 }
 The guests appear in order, side by side, }
 And, plac'd in state, the bridegroom and the bride. }
 The breathing flute's soft notes are heard around,
 And the shrill trumpets mix their silver sound;
 The vaulted roofs with echoing music ring, 320
 These touch the vocal stops, and those the trembling
 string.

Not thus Amphion tun'd the warbling lyre,
 Nor Joab the sounding clarion could inspire,
 Nor fierce Theodomas, whose sprightly strain
 Could swell the soul to rage, and fire the martial
 train. 325

Bacchus himself, the nuptial feast to grace,
 (So poets sing) was present on the place:
 And lovely Venus, goddess of delight,
 Shook high her flaming torch in open sight, }
 And danc'd around, and smil'd on every knight: }
 Pleas'd her best servant would his courage try, 331
 No less in wedlock than in liberty.

Full many an age old Hymen had not spied
 So kind a bridegroom, or so bright a bride.
 Ye Bards! renown'd among the tuneful throng 335
 For gentle lays, and joyous nuptial song,
 Think not your softest numbers can display
 The matchless glories of this blissful day;
 The joys are such as far transcend your rage,
 When tender youth has wedded stooping age. 340

The beauteous dame sate smiling at the board,
 And darted amorous glances at her lord.
 Not Esther's self, whose charms the Hebrews sing,
 E'er looked so lovely on her Persian king:

Bright as the rising sun in summer's day, 845
 And fresh and blooming as the month of May;
 The joyful knight survey'd her by his side,
 Nor envied Paris with the Spartan bride:
 Still as his mind revolv'd, with vast delight,
 Th' entrancing raptures of th' approaching night, 350
 Restless he sat, invoking every power
 To speed his bliss, and haste the happy hour.
 Meantime the vigorous dancers beat the ground,
 And songs were sung, and flowing bowls went round.
 With odorous spices they perfum'd the place, 355
 And mirth and pleasure shone in every face.

Damian alone, of all the menial train,
 Sad in the midst of triumphs, sigh'd for pain;
 Damian alone, the knight's obsequious squire,
 Consum'd at heart, and fed a secret fire. 360
 His lovely mistress all his soul possest;
 He look'd, he languish'd, and could take no rest:
 His task perform'd, he sadly went his way,
 Fell on his bed, and loath'd the light of day.
 There let him lie, till his relenting dame 365
 Weep in her turn, and waste in equal flame.

The weary sun, as learned poets write,
 Forsook th' horizon, and roll'd down the light;
 While glittering stars his absent beams supply,
 And night's dark mantle overspread the sky. 370
 Then rose the guests, and as the time requir'd,
 Each paid his thanks, and decently retir'd.

The foe once gone, our knight prepar'd t' undress,
 So keen he was, and eager to possess;
 But first thought fit th' assistance to receive, 875
 Which grave physicians scruple not to give;
 Satyrion near, with hot eringoes stood,
 Cantharides, to fire the lazy blood,
 Whose use old bards describe in luscious rhymes,
 And critics learn'd explain to modern times. 380

By this the sheets were spread, the bride undress'd,
 The room was sprinkled, and the bed was bless'd.

What next ensued beseems not me to say;
 'Tis sung, he labour'd till the dawning day, 384
 Then briskly sprung from bed, with heart so light,
 As all were nothing he had done by night,
 And sipp'd his cordial as he sat upright.
 He kiss'd his balmy spouse with wanton play,
 And feebly sung a lusty roundelay:
 Then on the couch his weary limbs he cast; 390
 For every labour must have rest at last.

But anxious cares the pensive squire opprest,
 Sleep fled his eyes, and peace forsook his breast;
 The raging flames that in his bosom dwell,
 He wanted art to hide, and means to tell: 395
 Yet hoping time th' occasion might betray,
 Compos'd a sonnet to the lovely May;
 Which, writ and folded with the nicest art,
 He wrapt in silk, and laid upon his heart.

When now the fourth revolving day was run, 400
 ('Twas June, and Cancer had receiv'd the sun,)
 Forth from her chamber came the beauteous bride,
 The good old knight mov'd slowly by her side.
 High mass was sung; they feasted in the hall;
 The servants round stood ready at their call. 405
 The squire alone was absent from the board,
 And much his sickness griev'd his worthy lord,
 Who pray'd his spouse, attended with her train,
 To visit Damian, and divert his pain.
 Th' obliging dames obey'd with one consent; 410
 They left the hall, and to his lodging went.
 The female tribe surround him as he lay,
 And close beside him sat the gentle May:
 Where, as she tried his pulse, he softly drew
 A heaving sigh, and cast a mournful view! 415
 Then gave his bill, and brib'd the pow'rs divine
 With secret vows, to favour his design.

Who studies now but discontented May?
 On her soft couch uneasily she lay:
 The lumpish husband snor'd away the night, 420
 Till coughs awak'd him near the morning light.

What then he did, I'll not presume to tell,
 Nor if she thought herself in heav'n or hell:
 Honest and dull in nuptial bed they lay,
 Till the bell toll'd, and all arose to pray. 425

Were it by forceful destiny decreed,
 Or did from chance, or nature's power proceed;
 Or that some star, with aspect kind to love,
 Shed its selectest influence from above:
 Whatever was the cause, the tender dame 430
 Felt the first motions of an infant flame;
 Receiv'd th' impressions of the love-sick squire,
 And wasted in the soft infectious fire.

Ye fair, draw near, let May's example move
 Your gentle minds to pity those who love! 435
 Had some fierce tyrant in her stead been found,
 The poor adorer sure had hang'd or drown'd;
 But she, your sex's mirror, free from pride,
 Was much too meek to prove a homicide.

But to my tale:—Some sages have defin'd 440
 Pleasure the sovereign bliss of human kind:
 Our knight (who studied much, we may suppose)
 Deriv'd his high philosophy from those;
 For, like a prince, he bore the vast expence
 Of lavish pomp, and proud magnificence: 445
 His house was stately, his retinue gay,
 Large was his train, and gorgeous his array.
 His spacious garden made to yield to none,
 Was compass'd round with walls of solid stone;
 Priapus could not half describe the grace 450
 (Though god of gardens) of this charming place:
 A place to tire the rambling wits of France
 In long descriptions, and exceed romance:
 Enough to shame the gentlest bard that sings
 Of painted meadows, and of purling springs. 455

Full in the centre of the flowery ground
 A crystal fountain spread its streams around,
 The fruitful banks with verdant laurels crown'd: }
 About this spring (if ancient fame say true)
 The dapper elves their moon-light sports pursue:

Their pigmy king, and little fairy queen,
 In circling dances gambol'd on the green,
 While tuneful sprites a merry concert made,
 And airy music warbled through the shade.

461

Hither the noble knight would oft repair,
 (His scene of pleasure, and peculiar care;) 465
 For this he held it dear, and always bore
 The silver key that lock'd the garden-door.
 To this sweet place, in summer's sultry heat,
 He us'd from noise and business to retreat; 470
 And here in dalliance spend the live-long day,
Solus cum sola, with his sprightly May:
 For whate'er work was undischarg'd a-bed,
 The duteous knight in this fair garden sped.

But ah! what mortal lives of bliss secure? 475
 How short a space our worldly joys endure!
 O fortune, fair, like all thy treacherous kind,
 But faithless still, and wavering as the wind!
 O painted monster, form'd mankind to cheat,
 With pleasing poison, and with soft deceit! 480
 This rich, this amorous, venerable knight,
 Amidst his ease, his solace, and delight,
 Struck blind by thee, resigns his days to grief,
 And calls on death, the wretch's last relief.

The rage of jealousy then seiz'd his mind, 485
 For much he fear'd the faith of womankind.
 His wife not suffer'd from his side to stray,
 Was captive kept; he watch'd her night and day, }
 Abridg'd her pleasures, and confin'd her sway. }
 Full oft in tears did hapless May complain, 490
 And sigh'd full oft; but sigh'd and wept in vain:
 She look'd on Damian with a lover's eye;
 For oh, twas fix'd; she must possess or die!
 Nor less impatience vex'd her amorous squire,
 Wild with delay, and burning with desire. 495
 Watch'd as she was, yet could he not refrain
 By secret writing to disclose his pain:
 The dame by signs reveal'd her kind intent,
 Till both were conscious what each other meant.

Ah! gentle knight, what would thy eyes avail,
 Though they could see as far as ships can sail? 501
 'Tis better, sure, when blind, deceiv'd to be,
 Than be deluded when a man can see!

Argus himself, so cautious and so wise,
 Was over-watch'd, for all his hundred eyes: 505
 So many an honest husband may, 'tis known,
 Who, wisely, never thinks the case his own.

The dame at last, by diligence and care,
 Procur'd the key her knight was wont to bear;
 She took the wards in wax before the fire, 510
 And gave th' impression to the trusty squire.
 By means of this some wonder shall appear,
 Which, in due place and season, you may hear.

Well sung sweet Ovid, in the days of yore,
 What flight is that which love will not explore? 515
 And Pyramus and Thisbe plainly show
 The feats true lovers, when they list, can do:
 Though watch'd and captive, yet in spite of all,
 They found the art of kissing through a wall.

But now no longer from our tale to stray, 520
 It happ'd; that once upon a summer's day,
 Our reverend knight was urg'd to amorous play:
 He rais'd his spouse ere matin-bell was rung,
 And thus his morning canticle he sung.

"Awake, my love, disclose thy radiant eyes: 525
 Arise, my wife, my beauteous lady, rise!
 Hear how the doves with pensive notes complain,
 And in soft murmurs tell the trees their pain:
 The winter's past; the clouds and tempests fly;
 The sun adorns the fields, and brightens all the sky.
 Fair without spot, whose every charming part 531
 My bosom wounds, and captivates my heart:
 Come, and in mutual pleasures let's engage,
 Joy of my life, and comfort of my age."

This heard, to Damian straight a sign she made
 To haste before; the gentle squire obey'd: 536
 Secret and undescried he took his way,
 And ambush'd close behind an arbour lay.

It was not long ere January came,
 And hand in hand with him his lovely dame ; 540
 Blind as he was, not doubting all was sure,
 He turn'd the key, and made the gate secure.

“ Here let us walk,” he said, “ observ'd by none,
 Conscious of pleasures to the world unknown:
 So may my soul have joy, as thou my wife 545
 Art far the dearest solace of my life :

And rather would I chuse, by Heav'n above,
 To die this instant, than to lose thy love.
 Reflect what truth was in my passion shown,
 When, unendow'd, I took thee for my own, 550 }
 And sought no treasure but thy heart alone. }
 Old as I am, and now depriv'd of sight, }
 Whilst thou art faithful to thy own true knight. }
 Nor age, nor blindness, rob me of delight. }
 Each other loss with patience I can bear, 555
 The loss of thee is what I only fear.

“ Consider then, my lady and my wife,
 The solid comforts of a virtuous life.
 As first, the love of Christ himself you gain;
 Next, your own honour undefil'd maintain ; 560
 And, lastly, that which sure your mind must move,
 My whole estate shall gratify your love:
 Make your own terms, and ere to-morrow's sun
 Displays his light, by Heav'n it shall be done.
 I seal the contract with a holy kiss, 565
 And will perform, by this—my dear, and this—
 Have comfort, spouse, nor think thy lord unkind;
 'Tis love, not jealousy, that fires my mind:
 For when thy charms my sober thoughts engage,
 And join'd to them my own unequal age, 570
 From thy dear side I have no power to part,
 Such secret transports warm my melting heart.
 For who that once possess'd those heav'nly charms,
 Could live one moment absent from thy arms?”

He ceas'd, and May with modest grace replied ;
 (Weak was her voice, as while she spoke she 576
 cried)

"Heav'n knows (with that a tender sigh she drew)
 I have a soul to save as well as you;
 And, what no less you to my charge commend,
 My dearest honour will to death defend. 580
 To you in holy church I gave my hand,
 And join'd my heart in wedlock's sacred band:
 Yet after this, if you distrust my care,
 Then hear, my lord, and witness what I swear:

"First may the yawning earth her bosom rend,
 And let me hence to hell alive descend; 586
 Or die the death I dread no less than hell,
 Sew'd in a sack, and plung'd into a well;
 Ere I my fame by one lewd act disgrace,
 Or once renounce the honour of my race. 590
 For know, sir knight, of gentle blood I came;
 I loath a whore, and startle at the name.
 But jealous men on their own crimes reflect,
 And learn from thence their ladies to suspect:
 Else why these needless cautions, sir, to me? 595
 These doubts and fears of female constancy?
 This chime still rings in every lady's ear,
 The only strain a wife must hope to hear."

Thus while she spoke, a sidelong glance she cast,
 Where Damian, kneeling, worshipp'd as she past.
 She saw him watch the motions of her eye, 601
 And singled out a pear-tree planted nigh:
 'Twas charg'd with fruit that made a goodly show,
 And hung with dangling pears was every bough.
 Thither th' obsequious squire address'd his pace, 605
 And climbing, in the summit took his place:
 The knight and lady walk'd beneath in view,
 Where let us leave them, and our tale pursue.

'Twas now the season when the glorious sun
 His heav'nly progress through the Twins had run:
 And Jove, exalted, his mild influence yields, 611
 To glad the glebe, and paint the flowery fields:
 Clear was the day, and Phœbus, rising bright,
 Had streak'd the azure firmament with light;
 He pierc'd the glittering clouds with golden streams,
 And warm'd the womb of earth with genial beams.

It so befel, in that fair morning tide,
 The fairies sported on the garden-side,
 And in the midst their monarch and his bride.
 So featly tripp'd the light-foot ladies round, 620
 The knights so nimbly o'er the greensward bound,
 That scarce they bent the flowers, or touch'd the
 ground.

The dances ended, all the fairy train
 For pinks and daisies search'd the flowery plain;
 While on a bank reclin'd of rising green, 625
 Thus, with a frown, the king bespoke his queen:—

“ 'Tis too apparent, argue what you can,
 The treachery you women use to man:
 A thousand authors have this truth made out,
 And sad experience leaves no room for doubt. 630

Heav'n rest thy spirit, noble Solomon,
 A wiser monarch never saw the sun:
 All wealth, all honours, the supreme degree
 Of earthly bliss, was well bestow'd on thee!
 For sagely hast thou said, of all mankind, 635
 One only just, and righteous, hope to find:
 But shouldst thou search the spacious world around,
 Yet one good woman is not to be found.

Thus says the king who knew your wickedness;
 The son of Sirach testifies no less. 640

So may some wildfire on your bodies fall,
 Or some devouring plague consume you all;
 As well you view the lecher in the tree,
 And well this honourable knight you see:
 But since he's blind and old (a helpless case) 645
 His squire shall cuckold him before your face.

“ Now by my own dread majesty I swear,
 And by this awful sceptre which I bear,
 No impious wretch shall 'scape unpunish'd long,
 That in my presence offers such a wrong, 650
 I will this instant undeceive the knight,
 And, in the very act, restore his sight:
 And set the strumpet here in open view,
 A warning to these ladies, and to you,
 And all the faithless sex, for ever to be true.” 655

"And will you so," replied the queen, "indeed?
 Now by my mother's soul, it is decreed,
 She shall not want an answer at her need.
 For her, and for her daughters, I'll engage,
 And all the sex in each succeeding age; 660
 Art shall be theirs to varnish an offence,
 And fortify their crimes with confidence.
 Nay, were they taken in a strict embrace,
 Seen with both eyes, and pinion'd on the place;
 All they shall need is to protest and swear, 665
 Breathe a soft sigh, and drop a tender tear;
 Till their wise husbands, gull'd by arts like these,
 Grow gentle, tractable, and tame as geese.

"What though this slanderous Jew, this Solomon,
 Call'd women fools, and knew full many a one; 670
 The wiser wits of later times declare
 How constant, chaste, and virtuous, women are:
 Witness the martyrs, who resign'd their breath,
 Serene in torments, unconcern'd in death;
 And witness next what Roman authors tell, 675
 How Arria, Porcia, and Lucretia fell.

"But since the sacred leaves to all are free,
 And men interpret texts, why should not we?
 By this no more was meant, than to have shown,
 That sovereign goodness dwells in him alone, 680
 Who only is, and is but only one.
 But grant the worst; shall women then be weigh'd
 By every word that Solomon hath said?
 What though this king (as ancient story boasts)
 Built a fair temple to the Lord of Hosts; 685
 He ceas'd at last his maker to adore,
 And did as much for idol gods, or more.
 Beware what lavish praises you confer
 On a rank lecher and idolater;
 Whose reign indulgent God, says holy writ, 690
 Did but for David's righteous sake permit;
 David, the monarch after Heaven's own mind,
 Who lov'd our sex, and honour'd all our kind.

"Well, I'm a woman, and as such must speak;
 Silence would swell me, and my heart would break;

Know then, I scorn your dull authorities,
 Your idle wits, and all their learned lies.
 By Heav'n, those authors are our sex's foes,
 Whom, in our right, I must and will oppose."

696

"Nay, (quoth the king) dear madam, be not wroth;
 I yield it up; but since I gave my oath,
 That this much-injur'd knight again should see,
 It must be done—I am a king, (said he)
 And one whose faith has ever sacred been—"

701

"And so has mine (she said)—I am a queen:
 Her answer she shall have, I undertake;
 And thus an end of all dispute I make.
 Try when you list; and you shall find, my lord,
 It is not in our sex to break our word."

705

We leave them here in this heroic strain,
 And to the knight our story turns again;
 Who, in the garden, with his lovely May,
 Sung merrier than the cuckoo or the jay:

710

This was his song; "Oh, kind and constant be,
 "Constant and kind I'll ever prove to thee"

715

Thus singing as he went, at last he drew,
 By easy steps to where the pear-tree grew:
 The longing dame look'd up, and spied her love
 Full fairly perch'd among the boughs above.
 She stopp'd, and sighing, "O good Gods! (she cried)
 What pangs, what sudden shoots distend my side;
 O for that tempting fruit, so fresh, so green;
 Help, for the love of Heaven's immortal queen;
 Help, dearest lord, and save at once the life
 Of thy poor infant, and thy longing wife!"

719

725

Sore sigh'd the knight to hear his lady's cry,
 But could not climb, and had no servant nigh:
 Old as he was, and void of eye-sight too,
 What could, alas! a helpless husband do?
 "And must I languish then, (she said) and die,
 Yet view the lovely fruit before my eye?
 At least, kind sir, for charity's sweet sake,
 Vouchsafe the trunk between your arms to take;
 Then from your back I might ascend the tree:
 Do you but stoop, and leave the rest to me."

730

735

“ With all my soul,” he thus replied again,
 “ I’d spend my dearest blood to ease thy pain.”
 With that his back against the trunk he bent;
 She seiz’d a twig, and up the tree she went.

Now prove your patience, gentle ladies all! 740
 Nor let on me your heavy anger fall:

’Tis truth I tell, though not in phrase refin’d;
 Though blunt my tale, yet honest is my mind.
 What feats the lady in the tree might do,
 I pass, as gambols never known to you; 745
 But sure it was a merrier fit, she swore,
 Than in her life she ever felt before.

In that nice moment, lo! the wondering knight
 Look’d out, and stood restor’d to sudden sight.
 Straight on the tree his eager eyes he bent, 750
 As one whose thoughts were on his spouse intent;
 But when he saw his bosom wife so dress’d,
 His rage was such as cannot be express’d:
 Not frantic mothers when their infants die,
 With louder clamours rend the vaulted sky: 755
 He cried, he roar’d, he storm’d, he tore his hair;
 “ Death! hell! and furies! what dost thou do there?”

“ What ails my lord?” the trembling dame replied;
 “ I thought your patience had been better tried:
 Is this your love, ungrateful and unkind, 760
 This my reward for having cur’d the blind?
 Why was I taught to make my husband see,
 By struggling with a man upon a tree?
 Did I for this the power of magic prove?
 Unhappy wife, whose crime was too much love! 765

“ If this be struggling, by this holy light,
 ’Tis struggling with a vengeance (quoth the knight);
 So Heav’n preserve the sight it has restor’d,
 As with these eyes I plainly saw thee whor’d;
 Whor’d by my slave—perfidious wretch! may Hell
 As surely seize thee, as I saw too well.” 771

“ Guard me, good angels!” cried the gentle May;
 “ Pray Heav’n this magic work the proper way!
 Alas, my love! ’tis certain, could you see,
 You ne’er had us’d these killing words to me: 775

So help me, fates ! as 'tis no perfect sight,
But some faint glimmering of a doubtful light.

“ What I have said (quoth he) I must maintain,
For by th' immortal pow'rs it *seem'd* too plain—”

“ By all those pow'rs, some frenzy seiz'd your
mind 780 }

(Replied the dame), are these the thanks I find,
Wretch that I am, that e'er I was so kind !”

She said ; a rising sigh express'd her woe,

The ready tears apace began to flow,

And as they fell she wip'd from either eye 785

The drops (for women, when they list, can cry).

The knight was touch'd ; and in his looks appear'd
Signs of remorse, while thus his spouse he cheer'd :

“ Madam 'tis past, and my short anger o'er !

Come down, and vex your tender heart no more: 790

Excuse me, dear, if ought amiss was said,

For, on my soul, amends shall soon be made:

Let my repentance your forgiveness draw ;

By heav'n, I swore but what I *thought* I saw.”

“ Ah, my lov'd lord ! 'twas much unkind (she cried)

On bare suspicion thus to treat your bride. 796

But till your sight's establish'd, for a while,

Imperfect objects may your sense beguile.

Thus, when from sleep we first our eyes display,

The balls are wounded with the piercing ray, 800 }

And dusky vapours rise, and intercept the day ;

So just recovering from the shades of night,

Your swimming eyes are drunk with sudden light, }

Strange phantoms dance around, and skim before }

your sight.

Then, sir, be cautious, nor too rashly deem ; 805

Heav'n knows how seldom things are what they
seem !

Consult your reason, and you soon shall find

'Twas you were jealous, not your wife unkind:

Jove ne'er spoke oracle more true than this ;

None judge so wrong as those who think amiss.” 810

With that she leap'd into her lord's embrace,

With well-dissembled virtue in her face.

I've had myself full many a merry fit,
 And trust in Heav'n I may have many yet;
 For when my transitory spouse, unkind,
 Shall die, and leave his woeful wife behind,
 I'll take the next good Christian I can find.

25 }

Paul, knowing one could never serve our turn,
 Declar'd 'twas better far to wed than burn.

There's danger in assembling fire and tow; 30

I grant them that; and what it means you know.

The same apostle, too, has elsewhere own'd,

No precept for virginity he found:

'Tis but a counsel—and we women still

Take which we like, the counsel or our will. 35

I envy not their bliss, if he or she

Think fit to live in perfect chastity:

Pure let them be, and free from taint of vice;

I for a few slight spots am not so nice.

Heav'n calls us different ways; on these bestows 40

One proper gift, another grants to those:

Not every man's oblig'd to sell his store,

And give up all his substance to the poor:

Such as are perfect may I can't deny;

But by your leaves, divines, so am not I. 45

Full many a saint, since first the world began,

Liv'd an unspotted maid in spite of man:

Let such (a God's name) with fine wheat be fed,

And let us honest wives eat barley-bread.

For me, I'll keep the post assign'd by Heav'n, 50

And use the copious talent it has giv'n:

Let my good spouse pay tribute, do me right,

And keep an equal reckoning every night;

His proper body is not his, but mine;

For so said Paul, and Paul's a sound divine. 55

Know then, of those five husbands I have had,

Three were just tolerable, two were bad.

The three were old, but rich, and fond beside,

And toil'd most piteously to please their bride;

But since their wealth (the best they had) was mine,

The rest without much loss I could resign: 61

Sure to be lov'd, I took no pains to please,
Yet had more pleasure far than they had ease.

Presents flow'd in apace: with showers of gold
They made their court, like Jupiter of old: 65
If I but smil'd a sudden youth they found,
And a new palsy seiz'd them when I frown'd.

Ye sovereign wives! give ear, and understand:
Thus shall ye speak, and exercise command;
For never was it given to mortal man 70
To lie so boldly as we women can:

Forswear the fact, though seen with both his eyes,
And call your maids to witness how he lies.

“Hark, old Sir Paul! ('twas thus I us'd to say)
Whence is our neighbour's wife so rich and gay? 75
Treated, caress'd, where'er she's pleas'd to roam—
I sit in tatters, and immur'd at home.

Why to her house dost thou so oft repair?
Art thou so amorous? and is she so fair?
If I but see a cousin or a friend, 80
Lord! how you swell and rage like any fiend!
But you reel home, a drunken beastly bear,
Then preach till midnight in your easy chair;
Cry wives are false, and every woman evil,
And give up all that's female to the devil. 85

“If poor (you say,) she drains her husband's purse;
If rich, she keeps her priest, or something worse;
If highly born, intolerably vain,
Vapours and pride by turns possess her brain;
Now gaily mad, now sourly splenetic, 90
Freakish when well, and fretful when she's sick:
If fair, then chaste she cannot long abide,
By pressing youth attack'd on every side;
If foul, her wealth the lusty lover lures,
Or else her wit some fool-gallant procures, 95
Or else she dances with becoming grace,
Or shape excuses the defects of face.

There swims no goose so gray, but soon or late,
She finds some honest gander for her mate.

“Horses (thou say'st) and asses men may try, 100
And ring suspected vessels ere they buy;

But wives, a random choice, they take;
 They dream in courtship, but in wedlock wake;
 Then, nor till then, the veil's remov'd away,
 And all the woman glares in open day. 105

“ You tell me, to preserve your wife's good grace,
 Your eyes must always languish on my face.
 Your tongue with constant flatteries feed my ear,
 And tag each sentence with ‘ My life! my dear!’
 If by strange chance a modest blush be rais'd, 110
 Be sure my fine complexion must be prais'd.
 My garments always must be new and gay,
 And feasts still kept upon my wedding-day;
 Then must my nurse be pleas'd, and favourite maid;
 And endless treats and endless visits paid 115
 To a long train of kindred, friends, allies:
 All this thou say'st, and all thou say'st are lies.

“ On Jenkin, too, you cast a squinting eye:
 What! can your 'prentice raise your jealousy?
 Fresh are his ruddy cheeks, his forehead fair, 120
 And like the burnish'd gold his curling hair;
 But clear thy wrinkled brow, and quit thy sorrow,
 I'd scorn your prentice should you die to-morrow.

“ Why are thy chests all lock'd? on what design?
 Are not thy worldly goods and treasures mine? 125
 Sir, I'm no fool nor shall you, by St. John,
 Have goods and body to yourself alone.
 One you shall quit in spite of both your eyes—
 I heed not, I, the bolts, the locks, the spies.
 If you had wit, you'd say, ‘ Go where you will, 130
 Dear spouse! I credit not the tales they tell:
 Take all the freedoms of a married life;
 I know thee for a virtuous faithful wife.’

“ Lord! when you have enough what need you care
 How merrily soever others fare? 135
 Though all the day I give and take delight,
 Doubt not sufficient will be left at night.
 'Tis but a just and rational desire
 To light a taper at a neighbour's fire.

“ There's danger too you think in rich array, 140
 And none can long be modest that are gay.

The cat, if you but singe her tabby skin,
 The chimney keeps and sits content within;
 But once grown sleek will from her corner run,
 Sport with her tail, and wanton in the sun: 145
 She licks her fair round face, and frisks abroad
 To shew her fur, and to be caterwau'd."

Lo thus, my friends, I wrought to my desires
 These three right ancient venerable sires.
 I told 'em, Thus you say and thus you do; 150
 I told 'em false, but Jenkin swore 'twas true.
 I, like a dog, could bite as well as whine,
 And first complain'd whene'er the guilt was mine.
 I tax'd them oft with wenching and amours,
 When their weak legs scarce dragg'd them out of
 doors; 155

And swore the rambles that I took by night
 Were all to spy what damsels they bedight:
 That colour brought me many hours of mirth;
 For all this wit is given us from our birth.
 Heav'n gave to woman the peculiar grace 160
 To spin, to weep, and cully human race.
 By this nice conduct and this prudent course,
 By murmuring, wheedling, stratagem, and force,
 I still prevail'd, and would be in the right;
 Or curtain lectures made a restless night. 165
 If once my husband's arm was o'er my side,
 "What! so familiar with your spouse?" I cried:
 I levied first a tax upon his need;
 Then let him—'twas a nicety indeed!
 Let all mankind this certain maxim hold, 170
 Marry who will, our sex is to be sold.
 With empty hands no tassels you can lure,
 But fulsome love for gain we can endure;
 For gold we love the impotent and old,
 And heave, and pant, and kiss, and cling, for gold.
 Yet with embraces curses oft I mixt, 176
 Then kiss'd again, and chid and rail'd betwixt.
 Well, I may make my will in peace, and die,
 For not one word in man's arrears am I.

To drop a dear dispute I was unable, 180
 Ev'n though the Pope himself had sat at table;
 But when my point was gain'd, then thus I spoke:
 " Billy, my dear! how sheepishly you look!
 Approach, my spouse, and let me kiss thy cheek;
 Thou shouldst be always thus, resign'd and meek.
 Of Job's great patience since so oft you preach, 186
 Well should you practice who so well can teach.
 'Tis difficult to do, I must allow,
 But I, my dearest! will instruct you how.
 Great is the blessing of a prudent wife, 190
 Who puts a period to domestic strife.
 One of us two must rule, and one obey;
 And since in man right reason bears the sway,
 Let that frail thing, weak woman, have her way. }
 The wives of all my family have rul'd 195
 Their tender husbands, and their passions cool'd.
 Fye! 'tis unmanly thus to sigh and groan:
 What! would you have me to yourself alone?
 Why, take me, love! take all and every part!
 Here's your revenge, you love it at your heart. 200
 Would I vouchsafe to sell what nature gave,
 You little think what custom I could have.
 But see! I'm all your own—nay hold—for shame!
 What means my dear?—indeed—you are to blame."
 Thus with my three first lords I pass'd my life, 205
 A very woman and a very wife.
 What sums from these old spouses I could raise
 Procur'd young husbands in my riper days.
 Though past my bloom not yet decay'd was I,
 Wanton and wild, and chatter'd like a pie. 210
 In country dances still I bore the bell,
 And sung as sweet as evening Philomel.
 To clear my quail-pipe, and refresh my soul,
 Full oft I drain'd the spicy nut-brown bowl;
 Rich luscious wines, that youthful blood improve,
 And warm the swelling veins to feats of love: 216
 For 'tis as sure as cold engenders hail,
 A liquorish mouth must have lecherous tail:

Wine lets no lover unrewarded go,
As all true gamesters by experience know. 220

But oh, good gods! whene'er a thought I cast
On all the joys of youth and beauty past,
To find in pleasures I have had my part,
Still warms me to the bottom of my heart.
This wicked world was once my dear delight; 225
Now all my conquests, all my charms, good night!
The flour consum'd, the best that now I can,
Is ev'n to make my market of the bran.

My fourth dear spouse was not exceeding true;
He kept, 'twas thought, a private miss or two: 230
But all that score I paid.—As how? you'll say.
Not with my body in a filthy way;
But so I dress'd, and danc'd, and drank, and din'd,
And view'd a friend with eyes so very kind,
As stung his heart, and made his marrow fry 235
With burning rage and frantic jealousy.
His soul, I hope, enjoys eternal glory,
For here on earth I was his purgatory.
Oft, when his shoe the most severely wrung,
He put on careless airs, and sat and sung. 240
How sore I gall'd him only Heav'n could know.
And he that felt, and I that caus'd the woe:
He died when last from pilgrimage I came,
With other gossips from Jerusalem;
And now lies buried underneath a rood, 245
Fair to be seen, and rear'd of honest wood:
A tomb, indeed, with fewer sculptures grac'd
Than that Mausolus' pious widow plac'd,
Or where enshrin'd the great Darius lay;
But cost on graves is merely thrown away. 250
The pit fill'd up with turf we cover'd o'er;
So bless the good man's soul! I say no more.

Now for my fifth lov'd lord, the last and best;
(Kind Heav'n afford him everlasting rest!)
Full hearty was his love, and I can shew 255
The tokens on my ribs in black and blue;
Yet with a knack my heart he could have won,
While yet the smart was shooting in the bone.

How quaint an appetite in woman reigns !
 Free gifts we scorn, and love what costs us pains: 260
 Let men avoid us, and on them we leap;
 A glutted market makes provision cheap.

In pure good-will I took this jovial spark,
 Of Oxford he, a most egregious clerk.

He boarded with a widow in the town, 265 .

A trusty gossip, one dame Alison;
 Full well the secrets of my soul she knew,
 Better than e'er our parish priest could do.

To her I told whatever could befall:

Had but my husband piss'd against a wall, 270

Or done a thing that might have cost his life,
 She—and my niece—and one more worthy wife,
 Had known it all: what most he would conceal,
 To these I made no scruple to reveal.

Oft has he blush'd from ear to ear for shame 275

That e'er he told a secret to his dame.

It so befel in holy time of Lent,

That oft a day I to this gossip went;

(My husband, thank my stars, was out of town)

From house to house we rambled up and down, 280

This clerk, myself, and my good neighbour Alse,
 To see, be seen, to tell, and gather tales.

Visits to every church we daily paid,

And march'd in every holy masquerade;

The stations duly and the vigils kept, 258

Not much we fasted, but scarce ever slept.

At sermons, too, I shone in scarlet gay;

The wasting moth ne'er spoil'd my best array;

The cause was this, I wore it every day. }

'Twas when fresh May her early blossoms yields,

This clerk and I were walking in the fields. 291

We grew so intimate, I can't tell how,

I pawn'd my honour and engag'd my vow,

If e'er I laid my husband in his urn,

That he, and only he should serve my turn. 295

We straight struck hands, the bargain was agreed;

I still have shifts against a time of need.

The mouse that always trusts to one poor hole
Can never be a mouse of any soul. 299

I vow'd I scarce could sleep since first I knew him.
And durst be sworn he had bewitch'd me to him;
If e'er I slept I dream'd of him alone,
And dreams foretell, as learned men have shown. }
All this I said; but dreams, sirs, I had none:
I follow'd but my crafty crony's lore, 305
Who bid me tell this lie—and twenty more.

Thus day by day, and month by month, we past;
It pleas'd the Lord to take my spouse at last.
I tore my gown, I soil'd my locks with dust,
And beat my breasts, as wretched widows—must.
Before my face my handkerchief I spread 311
To hide the floods of tears I did—not shed.
The good man's coffin to the church was borne;
Around the neighbours, and my clerk too, mourn:
But as he march'd, good gods! he show'd a pair
Of legs and feet so clean, so strong, so fair! 316
Of twenty winters' age he seem'd to be:
I (to say truth) was twenty more than he;
But vigorous still, a lively buxom dame,
And had a wondrous gift to quench a flame. 320
A conjurer once, that deeply could divine,
Assur'd me Mars in Taurus was my sign.
As the stars order'd, such my life has been:
Alas, alas! that ever love was sin!
Fair Venus gave me fire and sprightly grace, 325
And Mars assurance and a dauntless face.
By virtue of this powerful constellation
I follow'd always my own inclination.

But to my tale.—A month scarce pass'd away,
With dance and song we kept the nuptial day. 330
All I possess'd I gave to his command,
My goods and chattels, money, house, and land;
But oft repented, and repent it still;
He prov'd a rebel to my sovereign will:
Nay once, by Heav'n! he struck me on the face. 335
Hear but the fact, and judge yourselves the case.

Stubborn as any lioness was I,
And knew full well to raise my voice on high;
As true a rambler as I was before,
And would be so in spite of all he swore. 340
He against this right sagely would advise,
And old examples set before my eyes;
Tell how the Roman matrons led their life,
Of Gracchus' mother, and Duilius' wife;
And close the sermon, as beseem'd his wit, 345
With some grave sentence out of Holy Writ.
Oft would he say—Who builds his house on sands,
Pricks his blind horse across the fallow lands,
Or lets his wife abroad with pilgrims roam,
Deserves a fool's cap and long ears at home. 350
All this avail'd not; for whoe'er he be
That tells my faults, I hate him mortally;
And so do numbers more, I'd boldly say,
Men, women, clergy, regular, and lay.

My spouse (who was, you know, to learning bred)
A certain treatise oft at evening read, 356
Where divers authors (whom the devil confound)
For all their lies) were in one volume bound:
Valerius whole, and of St. Jerome part;
Chrysippus and Tertullian, Ovid's Art. 360
Solomon's Proverbs, Eloïsa's Loves,
And many more than sure the Church approves.
More legends were there here of wicked wives,
Than good in all the Bible and Saints' Lives.
Who drew the Lion vanquish'd? 'Twas a man; 365
But could we women write as scholars can,
Men should stand mark'd with far more wickedness
Than all the sons of Adam could redress.
Love seldom haunts the breast where learning lies,
And Venus sets ere Mercury can rise. 370
Those play the scholars who can't play the men,
And use that weapon which they have, their pen:
When old, and past the relish of delight,
Then down they sit, and in their dotage write
That not one woman keeps her marriage-vow, 375
(This by the way, but to my purpose now.)

It chanc'd my husband, on a winter's night,
 Read in this book aloud with strange delight,
 How the first female (as the Scriptures show)
 Brought her own spouse and all his race to woe; 380
 How Samson fell; and he whom Dejanire
 Wrapp'd in th' envenom'd shirt, and set on fire;
 How curs'd Eriphyle her lord betray'd,
 And the dire ambush Clytemnestra laid;
 But what most pleas'd him was the Cretan dame 385
 And husband-bull—Oh, monstrous! fye for shame!

He had by heart the whole detail of woe
 Xantippe made her good man undergo;
 How oft she scolded in a day he knew,
 How many pisspots on the sage she threw, 390
 Who took it patiently, and wip'd his head:
 "Rain follows thunder," that was all he said.

He read how Arius to his friend complain'd
 A fatal tree was growing in his land,
 On which three wives successively had twin'd 395
 A sliding noose, and waver'd in the wind.
 "Where grows this plant, (replied the friend,) oh!
 where?"

For better fruit did never orchard bear:
 Give me some slip of this most blissful tree,
 And in my garden planted it shall be." 400

Then how two wives their lords destruction prove,
 Through hatred one, and one through too much love;
 That for her husband mix'd a poisonous draught,
 And this for lust an amorous philtre bought:
 The nimble juice soon seiz'd his giddy head, 405
 Frantic at night, and in the morning dead.

How some with swords their sleeping lords have
 slain,
 And some have hammer'd nails into their brain,
 And some have drench'd them with a deadly potion:
 All this he read, and read with great devotion. 410
 Long time I heard, and swell'd, and blush'd, and
 frown'd;

But when no end of these vile tales I found,

When still he read, and laugh'd, and read again,
 And half the night was thus consum'd in vain,
 Provok'd to vengeance, three large leaves I tore, 415
 And with one buffet fell'd him on the floor.

With that my husband in a fury rose,
 And down he settled me with hearty blows.
 I groan'd, and lay extended on my side;
 "Oh! thou hast slain me for my wealth, (I cried:)
 Yet I forgive thee—take my last embrace—" 421

He wept, kind soul! and stoop'd to kiss my face:
 I took him such a box as turn'd him blue,
 Then sigh'd and cried, "Adieu, my dear, adieu!"

But after many a hearty struggle past, 425
 I condescended to be pleas'd at last.

Soon as he said, "My mistress and my wife!
 Do what you list the term of all your life;"

I took to heart the merits of the cause,
 And stood content to rule by wholesome laws; 430
 Receiv'd the reigns of absolute command,
 With all the government of house and land,
 And empire o'er his tongue and o'er his hand. }

As for the volume that revil'd the dames,
 'Twas torn to fragments and condemn'd to flames.

Now Heav'n on all my husbands gone bestow 436
 Pleasures above, for tortures felt below:
 That rest they wish'd for grant them in the grave,
 And bless those souls my conduct help'd to save!



IMITATIONS OF ENGLISH POETS.

[Done by the Author in his youth.]

I. CHAUCER.

WOMEN ben full of ragerie,
Yet swinken nat sans secresie.
Thilke moral shall ye understond,
From schoole-boy's tale of fayre Ireland;
Which to the fennes hath him betake, 5
To filche the grey ducke fro the lake.
Right then there passen by the way
His aunt, and eke her daughters tway.
Ducke in his trowses hath he hent,
Not to be spied of ladies gent. 10
"But ho! our nephew," crieth one;
"Ho!" quoth another, "Cozen John;"
And stoppen, and lough, and callen out—
This sely clerke full low doth lout:
They asken that, and talken this. 15
"Lo, here is coz, and here is miss."
But, as he glozeth with speeches soote,
The ducke sore tickleth his erse roote:
Fore-piece and buttons all to-brest
Forth thrust a white neck and red crest. 20
"Te-hee!" cried ladies: clerke nought spake:
Miss star'd, and grey ducke crieth "quaake."
"O moder, moder!" quoth the daughter,
"Be thilke same thing maids longen a'ter?"
Bette is to pine on coals and chalke, 25
Then trust on mon whose yerde can talke."

II. SPENSER.

THE ALLEY.

IN every town where Thamys rolls his tyde,
A narrow pass there is, with houses low.

Where ever and anon the stream is ey'd,
 And many a boat soft sliding to and fro:
 There oft are heard the notes of infant woe, 5
 The short thick sob, loud scream, and shriller squall:
 How can ye, mothers, vex your children so?
 Some play, some eat, some cack against the wall,
 And as they crouchen low for bread and butter call.

And on the broken pavement, here and there, 10
 Doth many a stinking sprat and herring lie;
 A brandy and tobacco shop is near,
 And hens, and dogs, and hogs, are feeding by;
 And here a sailor's jacket hangs to dry.
 At every door are sunburnt matrons seen 15
 Mending old nets to catch the scaly fry;
 Now singing shrill, and scolding eft between;
 Scolds answer foul-mouth'd scolds; bad neighbour-
 hood I ween.

The snappish cur (the passenger's annoy)
 Close at my heel with yelping treble flies; 20
 The whimpering girl, and hoarser screaming boy,
 Join to the yelping treble shrilling cries;
 The scolding quean to louder notes doth rise,
 And her full pipes those shrilling cries confound:
 To her full pipes the grunting hog replies: 25
 The grunting hogs alarm the neighbours round,
 And curs, girls, boys, and scolds, in the deep base
 are drown'd.

Hard by a sty, beneath a roof of thatch,
 Dwelt Obloquy, who in her early days
 Baskets of fish at Billingsgate did watch, 30
 Cod, whiting, oyster, mackrel, sprat, or plaice:
 There learn'd she speech from tongues that never
 Slander beside her like a magpie chatters, [cease.
 With Envy (spitting cat), dread foe to peace;
 Like a curs'd cur, Malice before her clatters, 35
 And vexing every wight, tears clothes and all to
 tatters.

Her dugs were mark'd by every collier's hand;
 Her mouth was black as bull-dogs at the stall:
 She scratched, bit, and spar'd ne lace ne band,
 And bitch and rogue her answer was to all; 40
 Nay, ev'n the parts of shame by name would call:
 Yea, when she passed by or lane or nook,
 Would greet the man who turn'd him to the wall,
 And by his hand obscene the porter took,
 Nor ever did askance like modest virgin look. 45

Such place hath Deptford, navy-building town,
 Woolwich and Wapping, smelling strong of pitch;
 Such Lambeth, envy of each band and gown,
 And Twickenham such, which fairer scenes enrich,
 Grots, statues, urns, and Jo—n's dog and bitch, 50
 Ne village is without, on either side,
 All up the silver Thames, or all adown;
 Ne Richmond's self, from whose tall front are ey'd
 Vales, spires, meandering streams, and Windsor's
 towery pride.

III. WALLER.

ON A LADY SINGING TO HER LUTE.

FAIR charmer! cease; nor make your voice's prize
 A heart resign'd the conquest of your eyes:
 Well might, alas! that threaten'd vessel fail,
 Which winds and lightning both at once assail.
 We were too bless'd with these enchanting lays, 5
 Which must be heavenly when an angel plays:
 But killing charms your lover's death contrive,
 Lest heavenly music should be heard alive.
 Orpheus could charm the trees; but thus a tree,
 Taught by your hand, can charm no less than he. 10
 A poet made the silent wood pursue;
 This vocal wood had drawn the poet too,

ON A FAN OF THE AUTHOR'S DESIGN,

*In which was painted the story of Cephalus and Procris,
with the motto, " Aura veni."*

COME, gentle air, th' Æolian shepherd said,
While Procris panted in the secret shade:
Come, gentle air! the fairer Delia cries,
While at her feet her swain expiring lies.
Lo! the glad gales o'er all her beauties stray, 5
Breathe on her lips, and in her bosom play!
In Delia's hand this toy is fatal found,
Nor could that fabled dart more surely wound:
Both gifts destructive to the givers prove;
Alike both lovers fall by those they love. 10
Yet guiltless too this bright destroyer lives,
At random wounds, nor knows the wound she gives:
She views the story with attentive eyes,
And pities Procris while her lover dies.

IV. COWLEY.

THE GARDEN.

FAIN would my Muse the flowery treasure sing,
And humble glories of the youthful Spring;
Where opening roses breathing sweets diffuse,
And soft carnations shower their balmy dews;
Where lilies smile in virgin robes of white, 5
The thin undress of superficial light,
And varied tulips show so dazzling gay,
Blushing in bright diversities of day.
Each painted floweret in the lake below
Surveys its beauties, whence its beauties grow; 10
And pale Narcissus, on the bank in vain
Transformed, gazes on himself again.
Here aged trees cathedral walks compose,
And mount the hill in venerable rows;
There the green infants in their beds are laid, 15
The garden's hope, and its expected shade.

Here orange-trees with blooms and pendants shine,
 And vernal honours to their autumn join;
 Exceed their promise in the ripen'd store,
 Yet in the rising blossom promise more. 20
 There in bright drops the crystal fountains play,
 By laurels shielded from the piercing day:
 Where Daphne, now a tree as once a maid,
 Still from Apollo vindicates her shade;
 Still turns her beauties from th' invading beam, 25
 Nor seeks in vain for succour to the stream.
 The stream at once preserves her virgin leaves,
 At once a shelter from her boughs receives,
 Where summer's beauty midst of winter stays,
 And winter's coolness spite of summer's rays. 30

WEeping.

WHILE Celia's tears make sorrow bright,
 Proud grief sits swelling in her eyes;
 The sun, next those the fairest light,
 Thus from the ocean first did rise:
 And thus through mists we see the sun, 5
 Which else we durst not gaze upon.

These silver drops, like morning dew,
 Foretell the fervour of the day:
 So from one cloud soft showers we view,
 And blasting lightnings burst away. 10
 The stars that fall from Celia's eye
 Declare our doom in drawing nigh.

The baby in that sunny sphere
 So like a Phaëton appears,
 That Heav'n, the threaten'd world to spare, 15
 Thought fit to drown him in her tears;
 Else might th' ambitious nymph aspire
 To set, like him, heav'n too on fire.

V. *EARL OF ROCHESTER.*

ON SILENCE.

SILENCE! coeval with eternity,
Thou wert ere Nature's self began to be;
'Twas one vast nothing all, and all slept fast in thee.

Thine was the sway ere heav'n was form'd, or earth,
Ere fruitful thought conceiv'd creation's birth, 5
Or midwife word gave aid, and spoke the infant forth.

Then various elements against thee join'd,
In one more various animal combin'd,
And fram'd the clamorous race of busy human-kind.

The tongue mov'd gently first, and speech was low, 10
Till wrangling science taught it noise and show,
And wicked wit arose, thy most abusive foe.

But rebel wit deserts thee oft in vain:
Lost in the maze of words he turns again,
And seeks a surer state, and courts thy gentle reign.

Afflicted sense thou kindly dost set free, 16
Oppress'd with argumental tyranny,
And routed reason finds a safe retreat in thee.

With thee in private modest dulness lies,
And in thy bosom lurks in thought's disguise; 20
Thou varnisher of fools, and cheat of all the wise!

Yet thy indulgence is by both confest;
Folly by thee lies sleeping in the breast,
And 'tis in thee at last that wisdom seeks for rest.

Silence! the knave's repute, the whore's good name,
The only honour of the wishing dame; 26
The very want of tongue makes thee a kind of fam

But couldst thou seize some tongues that now are free,
 How church and state should be oblig'd to thee!
 At senate and at bar how welcome wouldst thou be!

Yet speech ev'n there submissively withdraws 31
 From rights of subjects, and the poor man's cause:
 Then pompous Silence reigns, and stills the noisy laws.

Past services of friends, good deeds of foes,
 What favourites gain, and what the nation owes, 35
 Fly the forgetful world, and in thy arms repose.

The country wit, religion of the town,
 The courtier's learning, policy o' th' gown,
 Are best by thee express'd, and shine in thee alone.

The parson's cant, the lawyer's sophistry, 40
 Lord's quibble, critic's jest, all end in thee;
 All rest in peace at last, and sleep eternally.

VI. *EARL OF DORSET.*

ARTEMISIA.

THOUGH Artemisia talks by fits
 Of councils, classics, fathers, wits;
 Reads Malbranche, Boyle, and Locke;
 Yet in some things methinks she fails;
 'Twere well if she would pare her nails, 5
 And wear a cleaner smock.

Haughty and huge as High-Dutch bride,
 Such nastiness and so much pride
 Are oddly join'd by fate:
 On her large squab you find her spread, 10
 Like a fat corpse upon a bed,
 That lies and stinks in state.

She wears no colours (sign of grace)
 On any part except her face;
 All white and black beside: 15

Dauntless her look, her gesture proud,
Her voice theatrically loud,
And masculine her stride.

So have I seen, in black and white,
A prating thing, a magpye hight,
Majestically stalk;
A stately worthless animal,
That plies the tongue, and wags the tail,
All flutter, pride, and talk.

20

PHRYNE.

PHRYNE had talents for mankind;
Open she was and unconfin'd,
Like some free port of trade:
Merchants unloaded here their freight,
And agents from each foreign state
Here first their entry made.

Her learning and good-breeding such,
Whether th' Italian or the Dutch,
Spaniards or French came to her;
To all obliging she'd appear;
'Twas *Si Signior*, 'twas *Yaw Mynheer*,
'Twas *S'il vous plait, Monsieur*.

10

Obscure by birth, renown'd by crimes,
Still changing names, religions, climes,
At length she turns a bride:
In diamonds, pearls, and rich brocades,
She shines the first of batter'd jades,
And flutters in her pride.

15

So have I known those insects fair
(Which curious Germans hold so rare)
Still vary shapes and dyes;
Still gain new titles with new forms;
First grubs obscene, then wriggling worms,
Then painted butterflies.

20

VII. DR. SWIFT.

THE HAPPY LIFE OF A COUNTRY PARSON.

PARSON, these things in thy possessing
 Are better than the bishop's blessing:
 A wife that makes conserves; a steed
 That carries double when there's need;
 October store, and best Virginia, 5
 Tythe pig, and mortuary guinea;
 Gazettes sent gratis down and frank'd,
 For which thy patron's weekly thank'd;
 A large concordance, bound long since;
 Sermons to Charles the First when prince; 10
 A chronicle of ancient standing;
 A Chrysostom to smoothe thy band in:
 The Polyglot—three parts—my text,
 Howbeit—likewise—now to my next;
 Lo, here the Septuagint—and Paul, 15
 To sum the whole—the close of all.

He that has these may pass his life,
 Drink with the 'squire, and kiss his wife;
 On Sundays preach, and eat his fill,
 And fast on Fridays—if he will; 20
 Toast Church and Queen, explain the news,
 Talk with churchwardens about pews,
 Pray heartily for some new gift,
 And shake his head at Doctor S—t.



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END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.



Printed by R. M'Donald,
13, Green Arbour Court

Bayerische
Staatsbibliothek
München

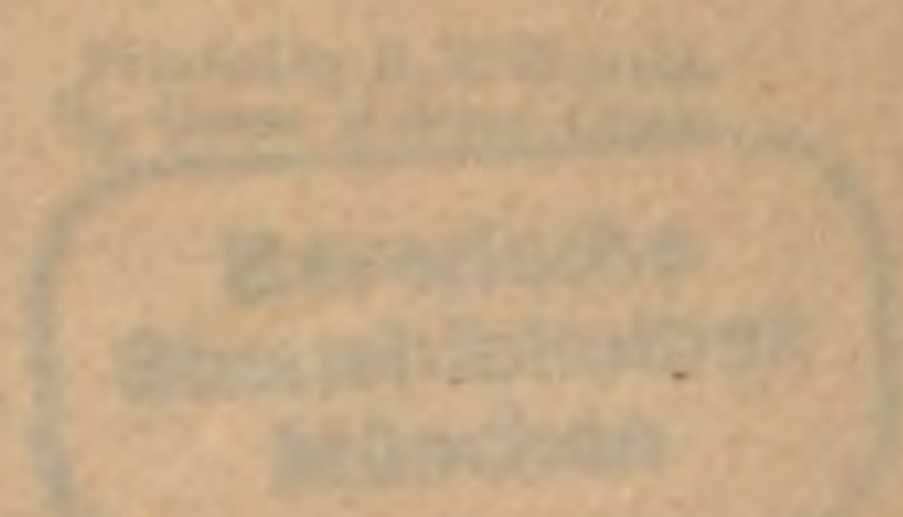
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Pope, Alexander,

The poetical works with his last corrections, additions and improvements ;
with the life of the author ; embellished with superb engravings

Bd.: Vol. 1

London [1807]

P.o.angl. 609 t-1

urn:nbn:de:bvb:12-bsb10753642-5